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# Some Unsetting Lights of English Literature

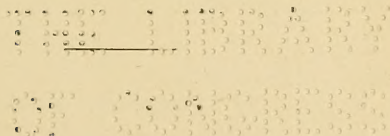
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*Never seduced by show of present good  
By other than unsetting lights to steer.*

—Lowell.

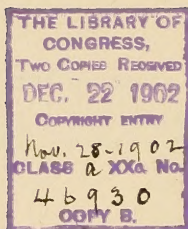
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Arranged and Edited by  
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CHICAGO  
AINSWORTH & COMPANY  
1903

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# Introduction

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"THE riches of scholarship, the benignities of literature, defy fortune and outlive calamity. They are beyond the reach of thief or moth or rust. As they cannot be inherited, so they cannot be alienated. But they may be shared. . . .

"Have you ever rightly considered what the mere ability to read means? That it enables us to see with the keenest eyes, hear with the finest ears, and listen to the sweetest voices of all time? . . .

"Every book we read may be made a round in the ever-lengthening ladder by which we climb to knowledge, and to that temperance and serenity of mind which, as it is the ripest fruit of Wisdom, is also the sweetest. But this can only be if we read such books as make us think, and read them in such a way as helps them to do so; that is, by endeavoring to judge them, and thus to make them an exercise rather than a relaxation of the mind."—*Lowell's Books and Libraries*.

The purpose held steadily in view during the selection and preparation of the contents of this book was to put into one handy volume some of the excellent works of literature.

The book is now sent out with the belief that it may please the taste and meet the needs of a portion of that large body somewhat indefinitely described as "the general reader," also be welcomed by avowed students of literature.

No one of Shakespeare's dramas is contained herein, as they are almost everywhere at hand in editions without number, and while these mighty works are read, other unsetting lights should not go unread.

Milton, the second of our poets, and one of the four greatest epic poets of the world, is drawn upon for but one of his minor poems, a bit of perfection in its kind, to aid the study of another great elegy, different in style and much more difficult. Reuben Post Halleck says: "*Adonais* stands second in the language among elegiac poems, *Lycidas*, of course, coming first."

With only a short step over the boundaries of truth the other writers may be said to be contemporaries, and surely were of the "choice and master spirits of their age."

*Childe Harold*, as here presented, is the best half of the best half of Byron's masterpiece. As the whole work is rather a series of episodes, or of poems, it readily yields itself to the ungrateful but sometimes imperative process of shortening.

It is not a rational possibility that one should take a *Journey*, though it be only a fireside travel, with Dr. Johnson across Scotland from Edinburgh to the western coast, over to Skye, Raasay, Col, Mull, Iona, and not enjoy the sight of hundreds of quaint and curious things in a part of the world which to most readers will be virgin soil. Besides, there is the rare opportunity of being present when these objects, animate and inanimate, strike the mind of one of history's most noted men, and of hearing him discourse upon them. It will be like "lunching with Plutarch," even if Plato does not join the company at supper. As in *Childe Harold*, so here,



the editor felt compelled to abridge. He used about one third of the *Journey*, but trusts that it may run along without too vividly reminding the traveler of one of those roads we travel in fancy. In each of these pieces we shall hear of heroic achievements, learn something of other literatures, and thrill with emotion over landscapes of beauty and majesty.

It is not rash to declare *Christabel* the finest poem of the kind in English, for it stands alone. It, *The Ancient Mariner*, and *Kubla Khan* are, however, sufficiently alike, and sufficiently unlike anything else, to have a very small alcove to themselves in the great Library of Literature, revealed to the inward eye of the imagination by rays of that light which, elsewhere, never was. One of our recent histories has this to say of *Christabel*: "Read and reread, the poem is seen to possess astonishing power—the noblest *torso* in English Literature." "Again and again" is a wise direction to give one about to make the acquaintance of any genuine bit of art.

Charles James Fox's rank as an orator was among the very highest; and in the times that tried men his vast powers were used on the side of the struggling colonies on this side the ocean; yet in America he is comparatively a stranger. We read Chatham's speeches and the younger Pitt's; speaking more discriminately, we read about these orators and their orations in Macaulay's brilliant essays; we read Burke's *American Taxation* and *Conciliation with America*, but we do not read Fox or about Fox; and we cannot readily come at chapter or book if we wish to read. It may be admitted that his speeches do not make as good reading as Burke's or Web-

ster's, but they are full of interest and instruction, and help us to a judgment as to what manner of man this was, and the times in which he acted so notable a part.

If asked to name the noblest, most sublimely poetical appeal to the religious nature of man offered us by the nineteenth century, a great many confident voices would respond "*Browning's Saul*." Read attentively, it charms the ear with its trumpet lines and lifts the soul to a higher plane. It illustrates by a high example the power of music. It leaves the man, when the ecstatic mood has passed, readier to take fast hold of the duties that lie along life's common way. Once introduced by this work to this poet, the reader will enjoy being a frequent visitor, — will find it good to be there.

The finest things which I could say about the most noted orator or poet would apply in substance to Charles Lamb, the essayist. Pages could be filled with words of appreciation spoken by the best critics of the writer's art about the *Essays of Elia*. If it were destiny's stern command that my library should be limited to ten authors, Lamb should be one.

Landor is another author who is not found on many shelves, but would be, if the people knew what he has to say, and would once catch the flavor of his way of saying it. Of Burke and Shelley and Wordsworth and Milton I need not add a word.

Throughout the book, here and there, the writers of whom I have been speaking will be heard expressing their opinion, as it were, about each other. It was thought this would be pleasing to the reader. There might be a short supplementary chapter, of the contents of which, let these be specimens: —

a. Browning means Wordsworth in the lines,—

“We that have loved him so, honored him, followed him,  
Lived in his mild and magnificent eye,  
Caught his clear accents, learned his great language,  
Made him our pattern to live or to die.”

b. Coleridge wrote one of his dramas upon a theme of Byron's selection.

c. Johnson, the greatest talker in the world, said of Burke: “That fellow calls forth all my powers.”

d. When Byron made his fierce attack on bards and reviewers, he fell afoul of Wordsworth's *The Idiot Boy*:—

“A moonstruck, silly lad, who lost his way,  
And like his bard, confounded night with day;  
So close on each pathetic part he dwells,  
And each adventure so sublimely tells,  
That all who view the idiot in his glory  
Conceive the bard the hero of the story,”

and a few lines below he declines to pass Coleridge unnoticed:—

“Though themes of innocence amuse him best,  
Yet still obscurity's a welcome guest.”

In his private copy Byron afterward wrote “unjust” after the foregoing passages.

e. A poem by Coleridge, *To William Wordsworth*, begins: “Friend of the wise! and teacher of the good!”

f. At the dramatic falling out of Burke and Fox in the British Parliament, Fox fervently declared, “He has taught me more than all my books.”

g. Lamb wrote to Coleridge: “You will find your



old associate, in his second volume, dwindled into prose and *criticism*. . . . or is it that as years come upon us, Life itself loses much of its Poetry for us? We transcribe but what we read in the great volume of Nature; and as the characters grow dim, we turn off, and look another way. You, yourself write no *Christabels* nor *Ancient Mariners* now;” and then Lamb looks back to the time “when life was fresh, and topics exhaustless, and you first kindled in me, if not the power, yet the love of poetry, and beauty, and kindliness.” In one of his essays we read: “If thy heart overfloweth to lend them, lend thy books; but let it be to such a one as S. T. C. (Coleridge): he will return them with usury, enriched with annotations tripling their value. I have had experience.”

Concerning the single but random sketch at the introduction of each author I would say, it is easily skipped but I hope that will not be its uniform fate. The footnotes might have been included in the above gracious hint and protest. To give aid to those who need it is their one purpose. Something can be said in an endeavor to justify the existence of notes, but it is much easier to be witty in the negative and show examples of annotation run wild.

I suppose that the proper note is the one which aptly meets a question when the answer cannot be drawn from the context and is not found in a common dictionary; which gives just what help is needed for the full comprehension of the passage. In poetry, the offense is not beyond the benefit of clergy if the note, though not needed as above, show, since the style counts for so much, some other man's way of saying the same thing, or if it point to the spring at which our author drank. But

“the fact is” that, like that of the man in *Hudibras*, “my preaching isn’t sanctioned (always) by my practice.”

No one enjoys poetry to the limit of his privilege who does not note closely, and observe in his reading, the meter; and, when rhyme is used, the scheme thereof, so that the ear may expect such and such a sequence of sounds and be pleased by it. Obedience to a rule we see at railway crossings: “Stop, look, and listen,” will win much gratification at small cost in reading poetry aloud, and that’s the more excellent way.

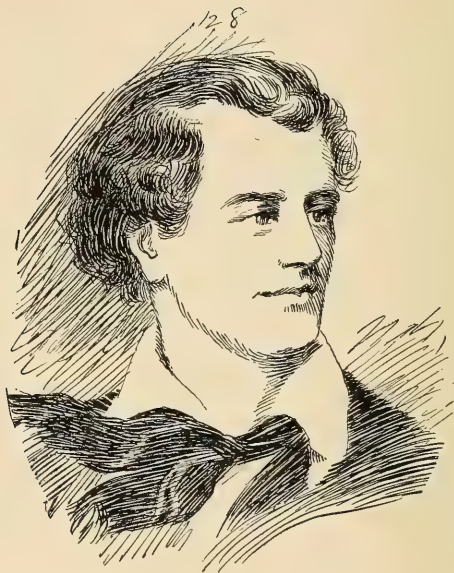
The reader will now and then come upon a word marked with a minute circle,—a kindly hint that the dictionary is a good adviser right here. Many of these words are used in a sense different from their ordinary meaning; for an example, Lamb’s phrase, “reducing childhood,” where “reducing” is plain Latin for “bringing back.”

This book goes out with the wish that it may be a source of pleasure and profit to many, and that it will tend to confirm them in the habit of reading and reading again. In that direction culture lies. B.









LORD BYRON.

## LORD BYRON.

1788-1824.

THE story of the life of Lord Byron is one of exceeding interest, and it is one not at all well known, even by thousands who occasionally read and in some degree appreciate certain of his writings. The plan of this book, however, prevents any attempt at even a brief sketch.

Born in 1788, the year of the first settlement in our great Northwest Territory, he died in 1824; a life, short, but full of labors.

Byron laid his first literary product before the public in 1807, *Hours of Idleness*, by name. In a curious preface he says, "With slight hopes and some fears, I publish this first and last attempt." Whatever the merits and demerits of these poems, some of them are certainly remarkable, coming from a boy. Still, in one or two instances, boys of his age have done better.

The *Edinburgh Review* sarcastically denied the right of the little book to exist, doubtless thought to cut that existence short and to confirm Byron in the resolution contained in the sentence just quoted.

Following are two or three of its bitter comments:—

"The poesy of this young lord belongs to the class which neither gods nor men are said to permit. Indeed, we do not recollect to have seen a quantity of verse with so few deviations in either direction from that exact standard.

"We must beg leave seriously to assure him, that

the mere rhyming of the final syllable, even when accompanied by the presence of a certain number of feet, . . . is not the whole art of poetry. We would entreat him to believe that a certain portion of liveliness, somewhat of fancy, is necessary to constitute a poem, and that a poem in the present day, to be read, must contain at least one thought, either in a little degree different from the ideas of former writers, or differently expressed."

There was some Ossianic poetry, as the *Review* terms it, in the thin volume. Relative to this it declares itself no judge, yet calling up in evidence some passages, it goes so far as to venture this opinion in their favor: "They look very like Macpherson; and we are positive they are pretty nearly as stupid and tiresome."

The "young lord" did not receive his lecture with the slightest degree of meekness. Seizing his weapon of defense,—and offense,—in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, he rushed to the fray. In what he says to the latter class of literary folk he is giving an eye for an eye, but he stoutly rang his spear against the shields of the former, and, sometimes, unfortunately, in lines much easier retained in one's memory. His war-cry was —

"Prepare for rhyme — I'll publish right or wrong;  
Fools are my theme, let satire be my song."

The critic of the *Review* roused him to show the world that he had in him stuff that did not deserve the *Review's* cruel taunts, and his reply was the beginning of his fame.

Some of his more prominent poetic creations are, *The Prisoner of Chillon*, *The Corsair*, *The Lament of*

*Tasso, Marino Faliero, Cain, Don Juan*, and, last named, but surely the greatest, *Childe Harold*.

Among Byron's intimate literary associates were Moore, Shelley, Keats, and Leigh Hunt. With Scott he had some personal acquaintance. Scott's nom de plume did not conceal from Byron the author of *Waverley*, and Scott, so the story runs, said that he ceased the writing of stirring metrical romances, "because Byron beat me."

Though led bodily captive by his own passions, Byron's tumultuous soul beat strong for human liberty. His message to peoples under oppression's iron hand was:—

Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not

Who would be free themselves must strike the blow?

When Greece, long in servitude to the tyrant at Constantinople "struck the blow," Byron threw himself with ardor into their cause, giving to its furtherance his time, energy, and money.

What might have been a brilliant military career was checked in its outburst. Byron died of a fever at Missolonghi, in the spring of 1824.





# Childe<sup>1</sup> Harold's Pilgrimage

---

## CANTO THE THIRD.<sup>2</sup>

Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child, 1  
Ada, sole daughter of my house and heart?  
When last I saw thy young blue eyes they smiled,  
And then we parted,—not as now we part,  
But with a hope.—

Awaking with a start,  
The waters heave around me, and on high  
The winds lift up their voices: I depart,<sup>3</sup>  
Whither I know not; but the hour's gone by  
When Albion's lessening shores could grieve or glad  
mine eye.

Once more upon the waters,—yet once more! 10  
And the waves bound beneath me as a steed  
That knows his rider. Welcome to their roar!  
Swift be their guidance, wheresoe'er it lead!  
Tho' the strain'd mast should quiver as a reed,  
And the rent canvas fluttering strew the gale,  
Still must I on; for I am as a weed,  
Flung from the rock, on Ocean's foam to sail  
Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath  
prevail.

---

<sup>1</sup> Once meant a noble youth. "Used here as more consonant with the old structure of the versification which I have adopted."  
— *Byron*.

<sup>2</sup> Written at Geneva.

<sup>3</sup> 1816. Byron left England—"Albion"—never to return.

In my youth's summer I did sing of One,<sup>4</sup> 19  
 The wandering outlaw of his own dark mind;  
 Again<sup>5</sup> I seize the theme then but begun,  
 And bear it with me, as the rushing wind  
 Bears the cloud onward: in that Tale I find  
 The furrows of long thought, and dried-up tears,  
 Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track behind,  
 O'er which all heavily the journeying years  
 Plod the last sands of life,—where not a flower  
 appears.

Since my young days of passion — joy, or pain —<sup>28</sup>  
 Perchance my heart and harp have lost a string,  
 And both may jar; it may be that in vain  
 I would essay as I have sung to sing.  
 Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I cling;  
 So that it wean<sup>6</sup> me from the weary dream  
 Of selfish grief or gladness — so it fling  
 Forgetfulness around me — it shall seem  
 To me, tho' to none else, a not ungrateful theme.

He who, grown aged in this world of woe, 37  
 In deeds, not years, piercing the depths of life,  
 So that no wonder waits him,<sup>7</sup> nor below  
 Can love, or sorrow, fame, ambition, strife,  
 Cut to his heart again with the keen knife  
 Of silent, sharp endurance,— he can tell  
 Why thought<sup>8</sup> seeks refuge in lone caves,<sup>8</sup> yet rife

---

<sup>4</sup> Childe Harold, in Cantos I and II.

<sup>5</sup> Eight years from time of beginning.

<sup>6</sup> Alleged purpose.

<sup>7</sup> Has seen them all.

<sup>8</sup> "From the deep caves of thought."—*Holmes*.

With airy <sup>9</sup> images and shapes <sup>9</sup> which dwell  
Still unimpair'd, tho' old, in the soul's haunted cell.

Something too much of this: — but now 't is past, <sup>46</sup>  
And the spell closes with its silent seal.

Long-absent Harold reappears at last,  
He of the breast which fain no more would feel,  
Wrung with the wounds which kill not, but ne'er  
heal;

Yet Time, who changes all, had alter'd him  
In soul and aspect as in age: years steal  
Fire from the mind as vigor from the limb,  
And life's enchanted cup but sparkles near the brim.<sup>10</sup>

Where rose the mountains, there to him were 55  
friends;

Where roll'd the ocean, thereon was his home; <sup>11</sup>  
Where a blue sky, and glowing clime, extends,  
He had the passion and the power to roam;  
The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,  
Were unto him companionship; they spake  
A mutual language, clearer than the tome<sup>o</sup>  
Of his land's tongue, which he would oft forsake  
For Nature's pages glass'd by sunbeams on the lake.

Like the Chaldean, he could watch the stars, 64  
Till he had peopled them with beings bright  
As their own beams; and earth, and earth-born jars,

---

<sup>9</sup> "Of calling shapes, and beck'ning shadows dire,  
And airy tongues that syllable men's names."

— *Milton*.

<sup>10</sup> The brim is youth; age and staleness lie beneath.

<sup>11</sup> "His hearth, the earth, his hall, the azure dome." — *Emerson*.



And human frailties were forgotten quite:  
 Could he have kept his spirit to that flight,  
 He had been happy; but this clay will sink  
 Its spark immortal, envying it the light  
 To which it mounts, as if to break the link  
 That keeps us from yon heaven which woos us to its  
 brink.

Stop! <sup>12</sup>— for thy tread is on an Empire's dust! 73  
 An earthquake's spoil is sepulchered below!  
 Is the spot mark'd <sup>13</sup> with no colossal bust,  
 Nor column trophied for triumphal show?  
 None,— but the moral's truth tells simpler so;  
 As the ground was before, thus let it be;—  
 How that red rain hath made the harvest grow!  
 And is this all the world has gain'd by thee,  
 Thou first and last of fields, king-making Victory?

There was a sound of revelry <sup>14</sup> by night, 82  
 And Belgium's capital had gather'd then <sup>15</sup>  
 Her Beauty and Her Chivalry, and bright  
 The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;  
 A thousand hearts beat happily; and when  
 Music arose with its voluptuous swell,  
 Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,  
 And all went merry as a marriage-bell;  
 But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising  
 knell!

---

<sup>12</sup> Abrupt as the explosion of a cannon.

<sup>13</sup> Is it yet unmarked?

<sup>14</sup> "On the night previous to the action it is said that a ball was given at Brussels."—*Byron*.

<sup>15</sup> "In spite of rhyme," often quoted, "gather'd there."

Did ye not hear it? — No; 'twas but the wind, 91  
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;  
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;  
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet  
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet.—  
But hark! — that heavy sound breaks in once more,  
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;  
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!  
Arm! arm! it is — it is — the cannon's opening roar!

Ah, then and there was hurrying to and fro, 100  
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,  
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago  
Blush'd at the praise of their own loveliness;  
And there were sudden partings, such as press  
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs  
Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess  
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,<sup>16</sup>  
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise?

And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed, 109  
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,  
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,  
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;  
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar,  
And near, the beat of the alarming drum  
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;  
While throng'd the citizens with terror dumb,  
Or whispering, with white lips — “The foe! they come!  
they come!”

---

<sup>16</sup> If those eyes now meeting should ever meet again.

And Ardennes <sup>17</sup> waves above them her green      118  
 leaves,  
 Dewy with Nature's tear-drops, as they pass,  
 Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,  
 Over the unreturning brave,— alas!  
 Ere evening to be trodden like the grass  
 Which now beneath them, but above shall grow  
 In its next verdure, when this fiery mass  
 Of living valor, rolling on the foe  
 And burning with high hope, shall molder cold and  
 low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,      127  
 Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay;  
 The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,  
 The morn the marshaling in arms,— the day  
 Battle's magnificently <sup>18</sup> stern array!  
 The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent  
 The earth is cover'd thick with other clay,<sup>19</sup>  
 Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd and pent,  
 Rider and horse,— friend, foe,— in one red burial  
 blent!

Their praise is hymn'd by loftier harps than mine; <sup>136</sup>  
 Yet one I would select from that proud throng,  
 Partly because they blend me with his line,  
 And partly that I did his sire some wrong,  
 And partly that bright names will hallow song;

---

<sup>17</sup> "The wood of Soignies is supposed to be a remnant of the 'forest of Arden,' immortal in 'As You Like It.'"—*Byron*. Pronounced "Arden."

<sup>18</sup> Note the force of the long, strong word.

<sup>19</sup> Explained in the last line of the stanza.

And his was of the bravest, and when shower'd  
The death-bolts deadliest the thinn'd files along,  
Even where the thickest of war's tempest lower'd,  
They reach'd no nobler breast than thine, young gal-  
lant Howard!

There have been tears and breaking hearts for   145  
thee,  
And mine were nothing, had I such to give;  
But when I stood beneath the fresh green tree  
Which living waves where thou didst cease to live,  
And saw around me the wide field revive  
With fruits and fertile promise, and the Spring  
Come forth her work of gladness to contrive,  
With all her reckless birds upon the wing,  
I turn'd from all she brought to those <sup>20</sup> she could not  
bring.

There sunk the greatest, nor the worst of men,   154  
Whose spirit, antithetically mixt,  
One moment of the mightiest, and again  
On little objects with like firmness fixt;  
Extreme in all things! hadst thou been betwixt,  
Thy throne had still been thine, or never been;  
For daring made thy rise as fall; thou seek'st  
Even now <sup>21</sup> to reassume the imperial mien,  
And shake the world, the Thunderer of the scene!

---

<sup>20</sup> "The place where Major Howard fell was not far from two tall and solitary trees. Beneath these he died and was buried. I went on horseback twice over the field, comparing it with my recollection of similar scenes. Waterloo seems marked out for the scene of some great action, though this may be imagination."—*Byron*.

<sup>21</sup> What scene in Napoleon's great world drama is here pointed out?



Oh, more or less than man — in high or low, 163  
 Battling with nations, flying from the field;  
 Now making monarchs' necks thy footstool, now  
 More than thy meanest soldier taught to yield;  
 An empire thou couldst crush, command, rebuild,  
 But govern <sup>22</sup> not thy pettiest passion, nor,  
 However deeply in men's spirits skill'd,  
 Look through thine own, nor curb the lust of war,  
 Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave the loftiest  
 star! <sup>23</sup>

If, like a tower upon a headlong° rock, 172  
 Thou hadst been made to stand or fall alone,  
 Such scorn of man had help'd to brave the shock;  
 But men's thoughts <sup>24</sup> were the steps which paved thy  
 throne,  
 Their admiration thy best weapon shone:  
 The part of Philip's son was thine, not then,—  
 Unless aside thy purple had been thrown,—  
 Like stern Diogenes to mock at men;  
 For sceptered cynics, earth were far too wide a den.

He who ascends to mountain-tops shall find 181  
 The loftiest peaks most wrapt in clouds and snow;  
 He who surpasses or subdues mankind  
 Must look down on the hate of those below.  
 Though high above the sun of glory glow,  
 And far beneath the earth and ocean spread,

---

<sup>22</sup> Bible allusion; quote it or hunt it.

<sup>23</sup> Desert a man when at the pinnacle of his fame.

<sup>24</sup> Napoleon, at the height, seemed to scorn men and their thoughts. He might conquer the world like Alexander, but needed only a tub to imitate Diogenes.

Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow  
Contending tempests on his naked head,  
And thus reward the toils which to those summits led.

Away with these! true Wisdom's world will be 190  
Within its own creation,—or in thine,  
Maternal Nature! for who teems like thee,  
Thus on the banks of thy majestic Rhine?  
There Harold gazes on a work divine,  
A blending of all beauties: streams and dells,  
Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield, mountain, vine,  
And chiefless castles breathing stern farewells  
From gray but leafy walls, where Ruin greenly dwells.

But thou, exulting and abounding river! 199  
Making thy waves a blessing as they flow  
Through banks whose beauty would endure forever  
Could man but leave thy bright creation so,  
Nor its fair promise from the surface mow  
With the sharp scythe of conflict,—then to see  
Thy valley of sweet waters were to know  
Earth <sup>25</sup> paved like heaven; and to seem such to me,  
Even now what wants thy stream?—that it should  
Lethe <sup>26</sup> be.

By Coblentz, on a rise of gentle ground, 208  
There is a small and simple pyramid,  
Crowning the summit of the verdant mound;  
Beneath its base are heroes' ashes hid,  
Our enemy's,—but let not that forbid

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<sup>25</sup> “Earth is crammed with Heaven.”—*Mrs. Browning*.

<sup>26</sup> Byron would forget the past, and Lethe is the river of oblivion.

Honor to Marceau,<sup>27</sup> o'er whose early tomb  
Tears, big tears, gush'd from the rough soldier's lid,  
Lamenting and yet envying such a doom,  
Falling for France, whose rights he battled to resume.

Brief, brave, and glorious was his young career, <sup>217</sup>  
His mourners were two hosts, his friends and foes;  
And fitly may the stranger lingering here  
Pray for his gallant spirit's bright repose:  
For he was Freedom's champion, one of those,  
The few in number, who had not o'erstept  
The charter to chastise which she bestows  
On such as wield her weapons; he had kept  
The whiteness of his soul, and thus men o'er him wept.

Here Ehrenbreitstein,<sup>28</sup> with her shatter'd wall <sup>226</sup>  
Black with the miner's blast, upon her height  
Yet shows of what she was, when shell and ball  
Rebounding idly on her strength did light;  
A tower of victory, from whence the flight  
Of baffled foes was watch'd along the plain!  
But Peace destroy'd what War could never blight,  
And laid those proud roofs bare to Summer's rain,  
On which the iron shower for years had pour'd in vain.

Adieu to thee, fair Rhine! How long delighted <sup>235</sup>  
The stranger fain would linger on his way!

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<sup>27</sup> The monument of the young and lamented General Marceau, killed on the last day of the fourth year of the Republic, still remains. The inscriptions are rather too long, and not required; his name was enough.—*Byron*.

<sup>28</sup> Ehrenbreitstein, one of the strongest fortresses in Europe, was blown up by the French at the truce of Leoben.—*Byron*.

Thine is a scene alike where souls united  
 Or lonely Contemplation <sup>29</sup> thus might stray;  
 And could the ceaseless vultures cease to prey  
 On self-condemning bosoms, it were here,  
 Where Nature, nor too somber nor too gay,  
 Wild but not rude, awful yet not austere,  
 Is to the mellow earth as Autumn to the year.

Adieu to thee again! — a vain <sup>30</sup> adieu! 244  
 There can be no farewell to scene like thine;  
 The mind is color'd by thine every hue,  
 And if reluctantly the eyes resign  
 Their cherish'd gaze upon thee, lovely Rhine,  
 'Tis with the thankful glance of parting praise:  
 More mighty spots may rise — more glaring shine,  
 But none united in one attaching maze  
 The brilliant, fair, and soft,— the glories of old days,

The negligently grand, the fruitful bloom 253  
 Of coming ripeness, the white city's sheen,  
 The rolling stream, the precipice's gloom,  
 The forest's growth and Gothic walls between,  
 The wild rocks shaped as they had turrets been  
 In mockery <sup>31</sup> of man's art; and these withal  
 A race of faces happy as the scene,  
 Whose fertile bounties here extend to all,  
 Still springing o'er thy banks, though empires near  
 them fall.

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<sup>29</sup> "by lonely Contemplation led."—*Gray*.

<sup>30</sup> Why "vain"?

<sup>31</sup> "No mortal builder's most rare device  
 Could match this winter-palace of ice."

— *Lowell*.

But these recede.<sup>32</sup> Above me are the Alps, 262  
The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls  
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,  
And throned Eternity in icy halls  
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls  
The avalanche — the thunderbolt of snow!  
All that expands the spirit, yet appals,  
Gather around these summits, as to show  
How earth may pierce to heaven, yet leave vain man  
below.

Lake Lemman woos me with its crystal face, 271  
The mirror where the stars and mountains view  
The stillness of their aspect in each trace  
Its clear depth yields of their far height and hue.  
There is too much of man here, to look through  
With a fit mind the might which I behold;  
But soon in me shall loneliness renew  
Thoughts hid, but not less cherished than of old,  
Ere mingling<sup>33</sup> with the herd had penn'd me in their  
fold.

I live not in myself, but I become 280  
Portion of that around me; and to me  
High mountains are a feeling, but the hum  
Of human cities torture; I can see  
Nothing to loathe in Nature, save to be  
A link reluctant in a fleshly chain,

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<sup>32</sup> I leave them, the beauties of the Rhine, for the sublimities of the Alps.

<sup>33</sup> ————— “with low-thoughted care  
Confined, and pestered in this pinfold here.”  
— *Milton*.

Class'd among creatures, when the soul can flee,  
And with the sky, the peak, the heaving plain  
Of ocean, or the stars, mingle, and not in vain.

Are not the mountains, waves, and skies a part      289  
Of me <sup>34</sup> and of my soul, as I of them?  
Is not the love of these deep in my heart  
With a pure passion? should I not condemn  
All objects, if compared with these? and stem  
A tide of suffering, rather than forego  
Such feelings for the hard and worldly phlegm  
Of those whose eyes are only turn'd below,  
Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts which dare not  
glow?

Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake <sup>35</sup>      298  
With the wild world I dwelt in is a thing  
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake  
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.  
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing  
To waft me from distraction; once I loved  
Torn Ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring  
Sounds sweet as if a sister's voice reproved,  
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so  
moved.

It is the hush of night, and all between      307  
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,  
Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly seen,  
Save darken'd Jura, whose capt <sup>36</sup> heights appear

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<sup>34</sup> "I am a part of all that I have met."—*Tennyson's Ulysses*.

<sup>35</sup> Thy lake contrasted with.

<sup>36</sup> With what?



Precipitously steep ; and drawing near,  
 There breathes a living fragrance from the shore  
 Of flowers yet fresh with childhood ; on the ear  
 Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,  
 Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more.

He is an evening reveler, who makes 316  
 His life an infancy, and sings his fill ;  
 At intervals, some bird from out the brakes  
 Starts into voice a moment, then is still.  
 There seems a floating whisper on the hill,  
 But that is fancy, for the starlight dews  
 All silently their tears of love instill,  
 Weeping themselves away, till they infuse  
 Deep into Nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

Ye stars, which are the poetry of heaven ! 325  
 If in your bright leaves we would read the fate  
 Of men and empires,—'tis to be forgiven,  
 That in our aspirations to be great  
 Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,  
 And claim a kindred with you ; for ye are  
 A beauty and a mystery, and create  
 In us such love and reverence from afar,  
 That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves  
 a star.

All heaven and earth are still — though not in 334  
 sleep,

But breathless, as we grow when feeling most,  
 And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep : —  
 All heaven and earth are still ; from the high host  
 Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain-coast,

All is concentered in a life intense,  
 Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,  
 But hath a part of being, and a sense  
 Of that which is of all Creator and defense.

The sky is changed! — and such a change! O 343  
 night,  
 And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,  
 Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light  
 Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,  
 From peak to peak, the rattling crags among,  
 Leaps the live thunder! not from one lone cloud,  
 But every mountain now hath found a tongue,  
 And Jura <sup>37</sup> answers, through her misty shroud,  
 Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

And this is in the night.— Most glorious night! 352  
 Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be  
 A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,—  
 A portion of the tempest and of thee!  
 How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,  
 And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!  
 And now again 'tis black, <sup>38</sup>— and now the glee  
 Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,  
 As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

Now where the swift Rhone cleaves his way 361  
 between

Heights which appear as lovers <sup>39</sup> who have parted  
 In hate, whose mining depths so intervene

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<sup>37</sup> "darkened Jura." Line 310.

<sup>38</sup> What is?

<sup>39</sup> Compare with this stanza, *Christabel*, Part the Second, Lines 411-429. Can this be one of those mooted passages spoken of in Coleridge's Preface?

That they can meet no more, tho' broken-hearted ;  
Though in their souls, which thus each other  
thwarted,  
Love was the very root of the fond rage  
Which blighted their life's bloom and then departed ;  
Itself expired, but leaving them an age  
Of years all winters,— war within themselves to wage.

Now where the quick Rhone thus hath cleft his      370  
way,  
The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en his stand :  
For here, not one, but many, make their play,  
And fling their thunderbolts from hand to hand,  
Flashing and cast around ; of all the band,  
The brightest through these parted hills hath fork'd  
His lightnings,— as if he did understand  
That in such gaps as desolation work'd  
There the hot shaft should blast whatever therein lurk'd.

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings ! ye, 379  
With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul  
To make these felt and feeling, well may be  
Things that have made me watchful ; the far roll  
Of your departing voices is the knoll  
Of what in me is sleepless,— if I rest.  
But where of ye, O tempests, is the goal?  
Are ye like those within the human breast  
Or do ye find at length, like eagles, some high nest?

Could I embody and unbosom now      388  
That which is most within me,— could I wreak  
My thoughts upon expression, and thus throw  
Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong or weak.

All that I would have sought, and all I seek,  
Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe — into one word,  
And that one word were Lightning, I would speak;  
But as it is, I live and die unheard,  
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a sword.

The morn is up again, the dewy morn, 397  
With breath all incense and with cheek all bloom,  
Laughing the clouds away with playful scorn,  
And living as if earth contain'd no tomb,—  
And glowing into day; we may resume  
The march of our existence: and thus I,  
Still on thy shores, fair Leman, may find room  
And food for meditation, nor pass by  
Much that may give us pause, if ponder'd fittingly.

Clarens, sweet Clarens, birthplace of deep Love! <sup>406</sup>  
Thine air is the young breath of passionate thought;  
Thy trees take root in Love; the snows above  
The very glaciers have his colors caught,  
And sunset into rose-hues <sup>40</sup> sees them wrought  
By rays which sleep there lovingly: the rocks,  
The permanent crags, tell here of Love, who sought  
In them a refuge from the worldly shocks  
Which stir and sting the soul with hope that woos,  
then mocks.

Clarens, by heavenly feet thy paths are trod,— 415

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<sup>40</sup> Rousseau has written it, "*une belle couleur de rose*," as the tint of the mountain tops.

Undying Love's,<sup>41</sup> who here ascends a throne  
 To which the steps are mountains; where the god  
 Is a pervading life and light,— so shown  
 Not on those summits solely, nor alone  
 In the still cave and forest; o'er the flower  
 His eye is sparkling and his breath hath blown,  
 His soft and summer breath, whose tender power  
 Passes the strength of storms in their most desolate  
 hour.

All things are here of *him*; from the black pines, <sup>424</sup>  
 Which are his shade on high, and the loud roar  
 Of torrents, where he listeneth, to the vines  
 Which slope his green path downward to the shore,  
 Where the bow'd waters meet him and adore,  
 Kissing his feet with murmurs; and the wood,  
 The covert of old trees, with trunks all hoar,  
 But light leaves young as joy, stands where it stood,  
 Offering to him and his a populous solitude.

He who hath loved not here would learn that 433  
 lore,  
 And make his heart a spirit; he who knows  
 That tender mystery will love the more,—  
 For this is Love's recess, where vain men's woes,  
 And the world's waste, have driven him far from  
 those,  
 For 'tis his nature to advance or die;  
 He stands not still, but or decays or grows

---

<sup>41</sup> Elsewhere, in praise of mountains, Byron wrote: "It is to be recollected that the most beautiful and impressive doctrines of the divine Founder of Christianity, were delivered, not in the Temple, but on the Mount."

Into a boundless blessing, which may vie  
With the immortal lights in its eternity!

'Twas not for fiction chose Rousseau this spot, 442  
Peopling it with affections, but he found  
It was the scene which Passion must allot  
To the mind's purified beings; 'twas the ground  
Where early Love his Psyche's zone unbound,  
And hallow'd it with loveliness: 'tis lone,  
And wonderful, and deep, and hath a sound,  
And sense, and sight of sweetness; here the Rhone  
Hath spread himself a couch, the Alps have rear'd a  
throne.

Lausanne and Ferney,<sup>42</sup> ye have been the abodes 451  
Of names which unto you bequeath'd a name;  
Mortals who sought and found, by dangerous roads,  
A path to perpetuity of fame:  
They were gigantic minds, and their steep aim  
Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts to pile  
Thoughts which should call down thunder, and the  
flame  
Of Heaven again assail'd, if Heaven the while  
On man and man's research could deign do more than  
smile.

But let me quit man's works, again to read 460  
His Maker's, spread around me, and suspend  
This page, which from my reveries I feed  
Until it seems prolonging without end.  
The clouds above me to the white Alps tend,  
And I must pierce them and survey whate'er

---

<sup>42</sup> Voltaire and Gibbon.



May be permitted, as my steps I bend  
 To their most great and growing region, where  
 The earth to her embrace compels the powers of air.

Italia, too, Italia! looking on thee, 469  
 Full flashes on the soul the light of ages,  
 Since the fierce Carthaginian <sup>43</sup> almost won thee,  
 To the last halo of the chiefs and sages <sup>44</sup>  
 Who glorify thy consecrated pages:  
 Thou wert the throne and grave of empires; still  
 The fount at which the panting mind <sup>45</sup> assuages  
 Her thirst of knowledge, quaffing there her fill,  
 Flows from the eternal source of Rome's imperial hill.

Thus far have I proceeded in a theme 478  
 Renew'd with no kind auspices: — to feel  
 We are not what we have been, and to deem  
 We are not what we should be, and to steel  
 The heart against itself; and to conceal,  
 With a proud caution, love, or hate, or aught —  
 Passion or feeling, purpose, grief, or zeal —  
 Which is the tyrant spirit of our thought,  
 Is a stern task of soul.— No matter,— it is taught.

And for these words, thus woven into song, 487  
 It may be that they are a harmless wile,—  
 The coloring of the scenes which fleet along,  
 Which I would seize, in passing, to beguile  
 My breast, or that of others, for a while.

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<sup>43</sup> Hannibal.

<sup>44</sup> Poets, orators, historians, philosophers.

<sup>45</sup> "Mind," feminine, *anima*? "*Animus est quo sapimus, anima, quo vivimus.*" — *Longinus*.

Fame <sup>46</sup> is the thirst of youth, but I am not  
 So young as to regard men's frown or smile  
 As loss or guerdon of a glorious lot;  
 I stood and stand alone,—remember'd or forgot.

I have not loved the world, nor the world me; <sup>496</sup>  
 I have not flatter'd its rank breath, nor bow'd  
 To its idolatries a patient knee,  
 Nor coin'd my cheek to smiles, nor cried aloud  
 In worship of an echo; in the crowd  
 They could not deem me one of such; I stood  
 Among them, but not of them, in a shroud  
 Of thoughts which were not their thoughts, and still  
 could,  
 Had I not filed <sup>47</sup> my mind, which thus itself subdued.

I have not loved the world, nor the world me,— <sup>505</sup>  
 But let us part fair foes; I do believe,  
 Though I have found them not, that there may be  
 Words which are things, hopes which will not de-  
 ceive,  
 And virtues which are merciful, nor weave  
 Snares for the failing: I would also deem  
 O'er others' griefs that some sincerely grieve;  
 That two, or one, are almost what they seem,—  
 That goodness is no name, and happiness no dream.

My daughter! with thy name this song begun; <sup>514</sup>  
 My daughter! with thy name thus much shall end;

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<sup>46</sup> "Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise  
 (That last infirmity of noble mind)  
 To scorn delights, and live laborious days."

— *Milton's Lycidas.*

<sup>47</sup> "For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind."—*Shakespeare.*

I see thee not, I hear thee not, but none  
Can be so wrapt in thee; thou art the friend  
To whom the shadows of far years extend:  
Albeit my brow thou never shouldst behold,  
My voice shall with thy future visions blend,  
And reach into thy heart when mine is cold,—  
A token and a tone, even from thy father's mold.

To aid thy mind's development, to watch  
Thy dawn of little joys, to sit and see  
Almost thy very growth, to view thee catch  
Knowledge of objects,— wonders yet to thee!  
To hold thee lightly on a gentle knee,  
And print on thy soft cheek a parent's kiss, —  
This it should seem, was not reserved for me;  
Yet this was in my nature: — as it is,  
I know not what is there, yet something like to this.

## CANTO THE FOURTH.

I STOOD in Venice,<sup>1</sup> on the Bridge <sup>2</sup> of Sighs ; 1  
A palace and a prison on each hand :  
I saw from out the wave her structures rise  
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand :  
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand  
Around me, and a dying glory smiles  
O'er the far times when many a subject land  
Look'd to the winged Lion's <sup>3</sup> marble piles,  
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred  
    isles !

She looks a sea Cybele,<sup>4</sup> fresh from ocean, 10  
Rising with her tiara of proud towers  
At airy distance, with majestic motion,  
A ruler of the waters and their powers :  
And such she was ; her daughters had their dowers  
From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East  
Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.  
In purple was she robed, and of her feast  
Monarchs partook, and deem'd their dignity increased.

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<sup>1</sup> This Canto was written at Venice. " Everything about Venice is, or was, extraordinary — her aspect is like a dream, and her history is like a romance." — *From preface to Marino Faliero.*

<sup>2</sup> The communication between the ducal palace and the prisons of Venice is by a gloomy bridge, or covered gallery, high above the water, and divided by a stone wall into a passage and a cell. . . . The low portal through which the criminal was taken into this cell is now walled up, but the passage is still open, and is still known by the name of the Bridge of Sighs. — *Byron.*

<sup>3</sup> The Lion of St. Mark, the standard of the republic.

<sup>4</sup> Mother of the gods ; presided over mountain fastnesses.

In Venice Tasso's <sup>5</sup> echoes are no more, 19  
 And silent rows the songless gondolier;  
 Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,  
 And music meets not always now the ear:  
 Those days are gone — but Beauty still is here.  
 States fall, arts fade — but Nature doth not die,  
 Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,  
 The pleasant place of all festivity,  
 The revel of the earth, the masque<sup>o</sup> of Italy!

But unto us she hath a spell beyond 28  
 Her name in story, and her long array  
 Of mighty shadows,<sup>o</sup> whose dim forms despond<sup>o</sup>  
 Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway:  
 Ours is a trophy which will not decay  
 With the Rialto; Shylock and the Moor,  
 And Pierre, cannot be swept<sup>6</sup> or worn away —  
 The keystones of the arch! though all were o'er,  
 For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

The beings of the mind are not of clay; 37  
 Essentially immortal, they create  
 And multiply in us a brighter ray  
 And more beloved existence: that which Fate  
 Prohibits to dull life, in this our state  
 Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied,  
 First exiles, then replaces what we hate;

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<sup>5</sup> "In Venice the gondoliers know by heart long passages from Ariosto and Tasso, and often chant them with a peculiar melody. If Lord Byron's statement be not more poetical than true, it must have occurred at a moment when their last political change may have occasioned this silence on the waters."—*Disraeli's Curiosities of Literature*.

<sup>6</sup> Embodied in immortal literature.

Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,  
And with a fresher growth replenishing the void.

Before Saint Mark <sup>7</sup> still glow his steeds of brass, <sup>46</sup>  
Their gilded collars glittering in the sun;  
But is not Doria's <sup>8</sup> menace come to pass?  
Are they not *bridled*? — Venice, <sup>9</sup> lost and won,  
Her thirteen hundred years of freedom done,  
Sinks, like a seaweed, into whence she rose!  
Better be whelm'd beneath the waves, and shun,  
Even in destruction's depth, her foreign foes,  
From whom submission wrings an infamous repose.

When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse, 55  
And fetter'd thousands bore the yoke of war,  
Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse, <sup>9a</sup>  
Her voice their only ransom from afar:  
See! as they chant the tragic hymn, the car  
Of the o'ermaster'd victor stops, the reins  
Fall from his hands, his idle scimitar  
Starts from its belt — he rends his captive's chains,  
And bids him thank the bard for freedom and his  
strains.

Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were thine, 64  
Were all thy proud historic deeds forgot,  
Thy choral memory of the Bard divine,

<sup>7</sup> The great cathedral, with its mighty steeds of brass.

<sup>8</sup> In 1379, when Venice offered to surrender on any terms leaving her her independence, Doria, commander of the Genoese, replied: "No peace till we have first put a rein on those unbridled horses of yours." But he did not do it. What then does Byron mean?

<sup>9</sup> Venice ceased to be free in 1796, the fifth year of the French republic.

<sup>9a</sup> Plutarch tells the story in his life of Nicias.



Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the knot <sup>10</sup>  
 Which ties thee to thy tyrants; and thy lot  
 Is shameful to the nations,—most of all,  
 Albion, to thee! the Ocean Queen should not  
 Abandon Ocean's children; in the fall  
 Of Venice think of thine,<sup>11</sup> despite thy watery wall.

The moon is up, and yet it is not night,— 73  
 Sunset divides the sky with her,— a sea  
 Of glory streams along the Alpine height  
 Of blue Friuli's mountains; heaven is free  
 From clouds, but of all colors seems to be,—  
 Melted to one vast Iris of the West,  
 Where the day joins the past eternity;<sup>12</sup>  
 While, on the other hand,<sup>13</sup> meek Dian's crest  
 Floats thro' the azure air — an island of the blest!

A single star is at her side, and reigns 82  
 With her o'er half the lovely heaven; but still  
 Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and remains  
 Roll'd o'er the peak of the far Rhætian hill,  
 As Day and Night contending were, until  
 Nature reclaim'd her order: — gently flows  
 The deep-dyed Brenta, where their <sup>14</sup> hues instill  
 The odorous purple of a new-born rose,  
 Which streams upon her stream, and glass'd within  
 it glows,

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<sup>10</sup> Venice's love of Tasso should have gained her a champion — England.

<sup>11</sup> A gloomy prophecy, not yet come true.

<sup>12</sup> And becomes yesterday.

<sup>13</sup> The east. Moon nearing her full.

<sup>14</sup> Day and Night.

Fill'd with the face of heaven, which, from afar, <sup>91</sup>  
 Comes down upon the waters; all its hues,  
 From the rich sunset to the rising star,  
 Their magical variety diffuse:  
 And now they change; a paler shadow strews  
 Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting Day  
 Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues  
 With a new color as it gasps away,  
 The last still loveliest, till — 'tis gone — and all is gray.

There is a tomb in Arqua; — rear'd in air, 100  
 Pillar'd in their sarcophagus, repose  
 The bones of Laura's lover: <sup>15</sup> here repair  
 Many familiar with his well-sung woes,  
 The pilgrims of his genius. He arose  
 To raise <sup>16</sup> a language, and his land reclaim  
 From the dull yoke of her barbaric foes:  
 Watering the tree <sup>17</sup> which bears his lady's name  
 With his melodious tears, he gave himself to fame.

They keep his dust in Arqua, where he died, 109  
 The mountain-village where his latter days  
 Went down the vale of years; and 'tis their pride —  
 An honest pride — and let it be their praise,  
 To offer to the passing stranger's gaze  
 His mansion and his sepulcher; both plain  
 And venerably simple, such as raise  
 A feeling more accordant with his strain  
 Than if a pyramid form'd his monumental fane.

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<sup>15</sup> Petrarch, first and greatest lyric poet of Italy, born 1304.

<sup>16</sup> As Chaucer did.

<sup>17</sup> The laurel.

Ferrara,<sup>18</sup> in thy wide and grass-grown streets, 118  
 Whose symmetry was not for solitude,<sup>19</sup>  
 There seems as 't were a curse upon the seats  
 Of former sovereigns, and the antique brood  
 Of Este,<sup>20</sup> which for many an age made good  
 Its strength within thy walls, and was of yore  
 Patron or tyrant, as the changing mood  
 Of petty power impell'd, of those who wore  
 The wreath which Dante's brow alone had worn before.

And Tasso <sup>21</sup> is their glory and their shame.<sup>21</sup> 127  
 Hark to his strain,—and then survey his cell!  
 And see how dearly earn'd Torquato's fame,  
 And where Alfonso bade his poet dwell;  
 The miserable despot <sup>22</sup> could not quell  
 The insulted mind he sought to quench, and blend  
 With the surrounding maniacs, in the hell  
 Where he had plunged it. Glory without end  
 Scatter'd the clouds away — and on that name attend

The tears and praises of all time; while thine 136  
 Would rot in its oblivion — in the sink  
 Of worthless dust, which from thy boasted line

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<sup>18</sup> Ducal seat of Alfonso.

<sup>19</sup> An architectural flower not "born to blush unseen."

<sup>20</sup> The ducal family.

<sup>21</sup> Tasso was confined in a madman's cell in the hospital at Ferrara.

"While thou, Ferrara! when no longer dwell  
 The ducal chiefs within thee, shalt fall down,  
 A poet's wreath shall be thine only crown,  
 A poet's dungeon thy most far renown."

— *The Lament of Tasso.*

<sup>22</sup> With the next fourteen lines compare Shelley's branding of Keats's critic, *Adonais*, lines 325-342.

Is shaken into nothing; but the link  
 Thou formest in his fortunes bids us think  
 Of thy poor malice, naming thee with scorn:  
 Alfonso, how thy ducal pageants shrink  
 From thee! if in another station born,  
 Scarce fit to be the slave of him thou madest to mourn!

*Thou*, form'd to eat, and be despised, and die, 145  
 Even as the beasts that perish, save that thou  
 Had'st a more splendid trough and wider sty!  
*He*, with a glory round his furrow'd brow,  
 Which emanated then, and dazzles now,  
 In face of all his foes, the Cruscan<sup>23</sup> quire,  
 And Boileau,<sup>24</sup> whose rash envy could allow  
 No strain which shamed his country's creaking lyre,  
 That whetstone of the teeth — monotony in wire!

Peace to Torquato's injured shade! 'twas his 154  
 In life and death to be the mark where Wrong  
 Aim'd with her poison'd arrows,—but to miss.  
 O victor unsurpass'd in modern song!  
 Each year brings forth its millions; but how long  
 The tide of generations shall roll on,  
 And not the whole combined and countless throng  
 Compose a mind like thine! though all in one  
 Condensed their scatter'd rays, they would not form a  
 sun.

Great as thou art, yet parallel'd by those, 163  
 Thy countrymen, before thee born to shine,

<sup>23</sup> Cruscan academy who sought to degrade Tasso.

<sup>24</sup> French critic,—he speaks of "*le clinquant du Tasse*."

The Bards of Hell <sup>25</sup> and Chivalry: <sup>26</sup> first rose  
 The Tuscan father's Comedy Divine;  
 Then, not unequal to the Florentine,  
 The southern Scott, <sup>27</sup> the minstrel who call'd forth  
 A new creation with his magic line,  
 And, like the Ariosto <sup>28</sup> of the North,  
 Sang ladye-love and war, romance and knightly worth.

The lightning rent <sup>29</sup> from Ariosto's bust 172  
 The iron crown of laurel's mimick'd leaves;  
 Nor was the ominous element unjust,  
 For the true laurel-wreath which Glory weaves  
 Is of the tree no bolt of thunder cleaves,  
 And the false semblance but disgraced his brow:  
 Yet still, if fondly Superstition grieves,  
 Know that the lightning sanctifies below  
 Whate'er it strikes; — yon head is doubly sacred now.

Italia! O Italia! thou who hast 181  
 The fatal gift of beauty, which became  
 A funeral dower of present woes and past,  
 On thy sweet brow is sorrow plough'd by shame,  
 And annals graved in characters of flame.  
 O God! that thou wert in thy nakedness  
 Less lovely or more powerful, and couldst claim  
 Thy right, and awe the robbers back who press  
 To shed thy blood and drink the tears of thy distress!

Yet, Italy, through every other land 190

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<sup>25</sup> Dante.

<sup>27</sup> Ariosto.

<sup>28</sup> Sir Walter Scott.

<sup>29</sup> An actual happening.

<sup>26</sup> Ariosto.

Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from side to side!  
Mother of Arts, as once of arms, thy hand  
Was then our guardian, and is still our guide!  
Parent <sup>30</sup> of our Religion, whom the wide  
Nations have knelt to for the keys of heaven!  
Europe repentant of her parricide,  
Shall yet redeem thee, and, all backward driven,  
Roll the barbarian tide, and sue to be forgiven.

But Arno wins us to the fair white walls 199  
Where the Etrurian Athens <sup>31</sup> claims and keeps  
A softer feeling for her fairy halls.  
Girt by her theater of hills, she reaps  
Her corn and wine and oil, and Plenty leaps  
To laughing life with her redundant horn.<sup>32</sup>  
Along the banks where smiling Arno sweeps  
Was modern Luxury of Commerce born,  
And buried Learning rose, redeem'd to a new morn.

There, too, the Goddess <sup>33</sup> loves in stone, and fills 208  
The air with beauty; we inhale  
The ambrosial aspect, which, beheld, instills  
Part of its immortality; the veil  
Of heaven is half undrawn; within the pale  
We stand, and in that form and face behold  
What Mind can make when Nature's self would fail,  
And to the fond idolators of old  
Envy the innate flash which such a soul could mold.

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<sup>30</sup> "*Papa caput ecclesiæ est.*"

<sup>31</sup> Florence.

<sup>32</sup> Cornucopia.

<sup>33</sup> Venus de Medici.



In Santa Croce's <sup>34</sup> holy precincts lie 217  
 Ashes which make it holier, dust which is  
 Even in itself an immortality,  
 Tho' there were nothing save the past, and this,  
 The particle of those sublimities  
 Which have relapsed to chaos: here repose  
 Angelo's, <sup>35</sup> Alfieri's <sup>36</sup> bones, and his,  
 The starry Galileo, <sup>37</sup> with his woes;  
 Here Machiavelli's <sup>38</sup> earth return'd to whence it rose.

These are four minds, which, like the elements,° <sup>226</sup>  
 Might furnish forth creation.—Italy!  
 Time, which hath wrong'd thee with ten thousand  
       rents  
 Of thine imperial garment, shall deny,  
 And hath denied, to every other sky,  
 Spirits which soar from ruin: thy decay  
 Is still impregnate with divinity,  
 Which gilds it with revivifying ray;  
 Such as the great of yore, Canova <sup>39</sup> is to-day.

But where repose the all-Etruscan three — 35  
 Dante, and Petrarch, and, scarce less than they,  
 The Bard <sup>40</sup> of Prose, creative spirit, he  
 Of the Hundred Tales of love — where did they lay

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<sup>34</sup> Holy Cross.

<sup>35</sup> The great painter, sculptor, and architect.

<sup>36</sup> "Alfieri is the great name of this age. The Italians, without waiting for the hundred years, consider him as a 'poet good in law.'" — *Byron*.

<sup>37</sup> The great Italian astronomer.

<sup>38</sup> A famous political writer whose name always suggests ways that are dark.

<sup>39</sup> An Italian sculptor then living.

<sup>40</sup> Boccaccio, in whose quarry Chaucer found so much to his hand.

Their bones, distinguish'd from our common clay  
 In death as life? Are they resolved to dust,  
 And have their country's marbles <sup>41</sup> nought to say?  
 Could not her quarries furnish forth one bust?  
 Did they not to her breast their filial earth intrust?

Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar, <sup>42</sup> 244  
 Like Scipio, <sup>43</sup> buried by the upbraiding shore:  
 Thy factions, in their worse than civil war,  
 Proscribed the bard whose name for evermore  
 Their children's children would in vain adore  
 With the remorse of ages; and the crown  
 Which Petrarch's laureate-brow supremely wore,  
 Upon a far and foreign soil had grown;  
 His life, his fame, his grave,—though rifled — not  
 thine own.

Boccaccio to his parent earth bequeath'd <sup>253</sup>  
 His dust,—and lies it not her Great among,  
 With many a sweet and solemn requiem breathed  
 O'er him who form'd the Tuscan's siren tongue,  
 That music in itself, whose sounds are song,  
 The poetry of speech? No; even his tomb,  
 Uptorn, must bear the hyena bigot's wrong,  
 No more amidst the meaner dead find room,  
 Nor claim a passing sigh <sup>44</sup> because it told for whom!

<sup>41</sup> Statues.

<sup>42</sup> See line 266.

<sup>43</sup> "The elder Scipio Africanus had a tomb, if he was not buried at Liternum, whither he had retired to voluntary banishment. This tomb was near the seashore, and the story of an inscription upon it, *Ingrata Patria*, is, if not true, at least an agreeable fiction."—*Byron*.

<sup>44</sup> "Implores the passing tribute of a sigh."—*Gray's Elgy*.

And Santa Croce wants their mighty dust; 262  
 Yet for this want more noted, as of yore  
 The Cæsar's pageant, shorn° of Brutus' bust,  
 Did but of Rome's best son remind her more:  
 Happier Ravenna! on thy hoary shore,  
 Fortress of falling empire, honor'd sleeps  
 The immortal exile; — Arqua, too, her store  
 Of tuneful relics proudly claims and keeps,  
 While Florence vainly begs her banish'd dead, and  
 weeps.

There be more things to greet the heart and eyes 271  
 In Arno's dome of Art's most princely shrine,  
 Where Sculpture with her rainbow sister vies;  
 There be more marvels yet — but not for mine;  
 For I have been accustom'd to entwine  
 My thoughts with Nature, rather in the fields  
 Than Art in galleries; though a work divine  
 Calls for my spirit's homage, yet it yields  
 Less than it feels, because the weapon which it wields

Is of another temper, and I roam 270  
 By Thrasimene's lake, in the defiles  
 Fatal to Roman rashness, more at home;  
 For there the Carthaginian's <sup>45</sup> warlike wiles  
 Come back before me, as his skill beguiles  
 The host between the mountains and the shore,  
 Where Courage falls in her despairing files,  
 And torrents, swoln to rivers with their gore,  
 Reek thro' the sultry plain, with legions scatter'd o'er.

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<sup>45</sup> “Near Thrasimene tradition is still faithful to the name of an enemy, and Hannibal the Carthaginian is the only ancient name remembered.”—*Byron*.

Like to a forest fell'd by mountain winds ; 289  
And such the storm of battle on this day,  
And such the frenzy, whose convulsion blinds  
To all save carnage, that, beneath the fray,  
An earthquake reel'd unheededly away ! <sup>46</sup>  
None felt stern Nature rocking at his feet,  
And yawning forth a grave for those who lay  
Upon their bucklers for a winding-sheet ;  
Such is the absorbing hate when warring nations meet !

The Earth to them was as a rolling bark 298  
Which bore them to Eternity ; they saw  
The Ocean round, but had no time to mark  
The motions of their vessel ; Nature's law,  
In them suspended, reck'd not of the awe  
Which reigns when mountains tremble, and the birds  
Plunge in the clouds for refuge and withdraw  
From their down-toppling nests, and bellowing herds  
Stumble o'er heaving plains, and man's dread hath no  
words.

Far other scene is Thrasimene now ; 307  
Her lake a sheet of silver, and her plain  
Rent by no ravage save the gentle plough ;  
Her aged trees rise thick as once the slain  
Lay where their roots are ; but a brook hath ta'en —  
A little rill of scanty stream and bed —  
A name of blood from that day's sanguine rain ;  
And Sanguinetto <sup>47</sup> tells ye where the dead  
Made the earth wet, and turn'd the unwilling waters  
red.

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<sup>46</sup> History so says.

<sup>47</sup> Defined in the context.

But thou, Clitumnus, in thy sweetest wave 316  
 Of the most living crystal that was e'er  
 The haunt of river nymph, to gaze and lave  
 Her limbs where nothing hid them, thou dost rear  
 Thy grassy banks whereon the milk-white steer  
 Grazes; the purest god of gentle waters,  
 And most serene of aspect, and most clear!  
 Surely that stream was unprofaned by slaughters,  
 A mirror and a bath for Beauty's youngest daughters.

And on thy happy shore a Temple still, 325  
 Of small and delicate proportion, keeps,  
 Upon a mild declivity of hill,  
 Its memory of thee; beneath it sweeps  
 Thy current's calmness; oft from out it leaps  
 The finny darter with the glittering scales,  
 Who dwells and revels in thy glassy deeps;  
 While, chance, some scatter'd water-lily sails  
 Down where the shallower <sup>48</sup> wave still tells its bub-  
 bling tales.

Pass not unblest the Genius of the place! 334  
 If through the air a zephyr more serene  
 Win <sup>48a</sup> to the brow, 'tis his; and if ye trace  
 Along his margin a more eloquent green,  
 If on the heart the freshness of the scene  
 Sprinkle its coolness, and from the dry dust  
 Of weary life a moment lave it clean  
 With Nature's baptism,— 'tis to him ye must  
 Pay orisons for this suspension of disgust.

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<sup>48</sup> "The shallows murmur, while the deeps are dumb."

<sup>48a</sup> reach, attain: "When we win to the greater light, we may see with different eyes."—*W. Black.*

The roar of waters! — from the headlong height <sup>343</sup>  
Velino cleaves the wave-worn precipice;  
The fall of waters! rapid as the light,  
The flashing mass foams shaking the abyss;  
The hell of waters! where they howl and hiss,  
And boil in endless torture; while the sweat  
Of their great agony, wrung out from this  
Their Phlegethon,<sup>49</sup> curls round the rocks of jet  
That gird the gulf around, in pitiless horror set,

And mounts in sprays the skies, and thence again <sup>352</sup>  
Returns in an unceasing shower, which round,  
With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,  
In an eternal April to the ground,  
Making it all one emerald: — how profound  
The gulf! and how the giant element  
From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,  
Crushing the cliffs, which, downward worn and rent  
With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful vent

To the broad column which rolls on, and shows <sup>361</sup>  
More like the fountain of an infant sea  
Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes  
Of a new world, than only thus to be  
Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly,  
With many windings, thro' the vale! — Look back!  
Lo, where it comes like an eternity,  
As if to sweep down all things in its track,  
Charming the eye with dread,— a matchless cataract,

Horribly beautiful! but on the verge, <sup>370</sup>  
From side to side, beneath the glittering morn,

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<sup>49</sup> A river in the lower regions.



An Iris <sup>50</sup> sits, amidst the infernal surge,  
 Like Hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn  
 Its steady dyes while all around is torn  
 By the distracted waters, bears serene  
 Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn:  
 Resembling, mid the torture of the scene,  
 Love watching Madness with unalterable mien.

Once more upon the woody Apennine, 379  
 The infant Alps, which — had I not before  
 Gazed on their mightier parents, where the pine  
 Sits on more shaggy summits, and where roar  
 The thundering lauwine° — might be worship'd more;  
 But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau rear  
 Her never-trodden snow, and seen the hoar  
 Glaciers of bleak Mont Blanc <sup>51</sup> both far and near,  
 And in Chimari <sup>51</sup> heard the thunder-hills of fear —

Th' Acroceraunian <sup>51</sup> mountains of old name; 388  
 And on Parnassus seen the eagles fly  
 Like spirits of the spot, as 't were for fame,  
 For still they soar'd unutterably high:  
 I've looked on Ida <sup>52</sup> with a Trojan's eye;  
 Athos, Olympus, Ætna, Atlas, made  
 These hills seem things of lesser dignity,  
 All, save the lone Soracte's height, display'd  
 Not *now* in snow, which asks the lyric Roman's <sup>53</sup> aid

For our remembrance, and from out the plain 397  
 Heaves like a long-swept wave about to break,

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<sup>50</sup> rainbow.

<sup>51</sup> Watch the meter and pronunciation.

<sup>52</sup> A mountain near Troy.

<sup>53</sup> Horace.

And on the curl hangs pausing.<sup>54</sup> Not in vain  
 May he, who will, his recollections rake,  
 And quote in classic raptures, and awake  
 The hills with Latian echoes: I abhorr'd  
 Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,  
 The drill'd dull lesson, forced down word by word  
 In my repugnant youth, with pleasure to record

Aught that recalls the daily drug which turn'd 406  
 My sickening memory; and, though Time hath taught  
 My mind to meditate what then it learn'd,  
 Yet such the fix'd inveteracy wrought  
 By the impatience of my early thought,  
 That, with the freshness wearing out before  
 My mind could relish what it might have sought,  
 If free to choose, I cannot now restore  
 Its health, but what it then detested still abhor.

Then farewell,<sup>55</sup> Horace, whom I hated so, 415  
 Not for thy faults, but mine; it is a curse  
 To understand, not feel, thy lyric flow —  
 To comprehend, but never love, thy verse;  
 Although no deeper Moralist rehearse  
 Our little life, nor Bard prescribe his art,  
 Nor livelier Satirist the conscience pierce,

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<sup>54</sup> "For beauty's acme hath a term as brief  
 As the wave's poise before it breaks in pearl."

— *Lowell*.

<sup>55</sup> "I wish to express that we become tired of the task before we can comprehend the beauty; . . . I was not a slow, though an idle, boy; my preceptor was the best and worthiest friend I ever possessed, whose warnings I have remembered but too well, though too late — when I have erred, and whose counsels I have but followed when I have done well or wisely." — *Byron*.

Awakening without wounding the touch'd heart,  
Yet fare thee well — upon Soracte's ridge we part.

Sylla was first of victors; but our own, 424  
The sagest of usurpers, Cromwell,<sup>56</sup> — he  
Too swept off senates while he hew'd the throne  
Down to a block — immortal rebel! See  
What crimes it costs to be a moment free,  
And famous through all ages! but beneath  
His fate the moral lurks of destiny;  
His day of double <sup>57</sup> victory and death  
Beheld him win two <sup>58</sup> realms, and, happier, yield his  
breath.

Oh! Rome my country, city of the soul! 433  
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,  
Lone mother of dead empires! and control  
In their shut breasts their petty misery.  
What are our woes and sufferance? Come and see  
The cypress, hear the owl and plod your way  
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples. Ye!  
Whose agonies are evils of a day —  
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

The Niobe <sup>59</sup> of nations! there she stands, 442

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<sup>56</sup> "Cromwell was a usurper; and in many points there may be found a resemblance between him and the present chief consul." — *Fox*.

<sup>57</sup> Cromwell died on September 3d, the anniversary of his two great victories of Worcester and Dunbar.

<sup>58</sup> England and Scotland.

<sup>59</sup> She offended Latona, the mother of Apollo and Diana, and for vengeance' sake Diana (Artemis) shot to death all her sons and daughters.

Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe  
 An empty urn within her withered hands,  
 Whose holy dust was scattered long ago;  
 The Scipio's <sup>60</sup> tomb contains no ashes now;  
 The very sepulchers lie tenantless  
 Of their heroic dwellers: dost thou flow,  
 Old Tiber! through a marble wilderness?  
 Rise, with thy yellow waves and mantle her distress.

Alas! the lofty city! and alas! 451  
 The trebly hundred triumphs! and the day  
 When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass  
 The Conqueror's sword in bearing fame away!  
 Alas! for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,  
 And Livy's pictured page! — but these shall be  
 Her resurrection; all beside — decay.  
 Alas, for earth, for never shall we see  
 That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome was  
 free!

What from this barren being do we reap? 460  
 Our senses narrow, and our reason frail,  
 Life short, and truth a gem which loves the deep,<sup>61</sup>  
 And all things weigh'd in custom's falsest scale;  
 Opinion an omnipotence,— whose veil  
 Mantles the earth with darkness, until right  
 And wrong are accidents, and men grow pale

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"Amid nine daughters slain by Artemis  
 Stood Niobe. . . .

One prayer remains  
 For me to offer yet. Thy quiver holds  
 More than nine arrows; bend the bow; aim here!"

<sup>60</sup> See note to line 245.

<sup>61</sup> "Truth lies in a well."

Lest their own judgments should become too bright,  
And their free thoughts be crimes, and earth have too  
much light.

I speak not of men's creeds — they rest between <sup>469</sup>  
Man and his Maker — but of things allow'd,  
Averr'd, and known, and daily, hourly seen —  
The yoke that is upon us doubly bow'd,  
And the intent of tyranny avow'd,  
The edict of Earth's rulers, who are grown  
The apes of him <sup>62</sup> who humbled once the proud,  
And shook them from their slumbers on the throne;  
Too glorious, were this all his mighty arm had done.

Can tyrants but by tyrants conquer'd be, <sup>478</sup>  
And Freedom find no champion and no child  
Such as Columbia saw arise when she  
Sprung forth a Pallas,<sup>63</sup> arm'd and undefiled?  
Or must such minds be nourish'd in the wild,  
Deep in the unpruned forest,<sup>64</sup> 'midst the roar  
Of cataracts, where nursing Nature smiled  
On infant Washington? Has Earth no more  
Such seeds within her breast,<sup>65</sup> or Europe no such  
shore?

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<sup>62</sup> Napoleon.

<sup>63</sup> Minerva, or Pallas, sprang forth full-armed from the brain of Jupiter.

<sup>64</sup> Byron forgets that Virginia was settled over a hundred years before Washington was born.

<sup>65</sup> Lowell thought the supply not out: —

"For him her Old-World molds aside she threw,  
And, choosing sweet clay from the breast  
Of the unexhausted West,

With stuff untainted shaped a hero new."

Who was this hero?

There is the moral of all human tales ; 487  
 'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past :  
 First Freedom, and then Glory,— when that fails,  
 Wealth, vice, corruption,— Barbarism at last :  
 And History, with all her volumes vast,  
 Hath but one page,— 'tis better written here,  
 Where gorgeous Tyranny hath thus amass'd  
 All treasures, all delights, that eye or ear,  
 Heart, soul could seek, tongue ask ;— away with  
 words ! draw near,

Admire, exult, despise, laugh, weep,— for here 496  
 There is such matter for all feeling.— Man,  
 Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear !  
 Ages and realms are crowded in this span,  
 This mountain, whose obliterated plan  
 The pyramid of empires pinnacled,  
 Of Glory's gewgaws shining in the van  
 Till the sun's rays with added flame were fill'd !  
 Where are its golden roofs ! where those who dared to  
 build ?

Tully was not so eloquent as thou, 505  
 Thou nameless column with the buried base !  
 What are the laurels of the Cæsar's brow ?  
 Crown me with ivy from his dwelling-place !  
 Whose arch or pillar meets me in the face,  
 Titus' or Trajan's ? No — 'tis that of Time :  
 Triumph, arch, pillar, all he doth displace  
 Scoffing ; and apostolic statues <sup>66</sup> climb  
 To crush the imperial urn, whose ashes slept sublime,

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<sup>66</sup> The Column of Trajan is surmounted by St. Peter, that of Aurelius by St. Paul.— *Byron*.



Buried in air, the deep-blue sky of Rome, 514  
 And looking to the stars: they had contain'd  
 A spirit which with these would find a home,  
 The last of those who o'er the whole earth reign'd,  
 The Roman globe, for after none sustain'd,  
 But yielded back his conquests: — he was more  
 Than a mere Alexander, and, unstain'd  
 With household blood and wine, serenely wore  
 His sovereign virtues—still we Trajan's <sup>67</sup> name adore.

Where is the rock of Triumph, the high place 523  
 Where Rome embraced her heroes? where the steep  
 Tarpeian — fittest goal of Treason's race,  
 The promontory whence the Traitor's Leap  
 Cured all ambition? Did the conquerors heap  
 Their spoils here? Yes; and in yon field below,  
 A thousand years of silenced factions sleep,—  
 The Forum, where the immortal accents glow,  
 And still the eloquent air breathes — burns with Cicero!

Then turn we to her latest tribune's name,— 532  
 From her ten thousand tyrants, turn to thee,  
 Redeemer of dark centuries of shame —  
 The friend of Petrarch — hope of Italy —  
 Rienzi,<sup>68</sup> last of Romans! While the tree  
 Of Freedom's wither'd trunk puts forth a leaf,  
 Even for thy tomb a garland let it be —

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<sup>67</sup> Proverbially the best of the Roman emperors. "Even down to our age one is not applauded among the chief statesmen in the Senate, except, 'More glorious than Augustus, better than Trajan.'" — *Eutropius's Short History of Rome*.

<sup>68</sup> Who "came not here to talk."

The forum's champion, and the people's chief,—  
Her new-born Numa thou — with reign, alas! too brief.

O Love, no habitant of earth thou art! 541  
An unseen seraph, we believe in thee,—  
A faith whose martyrs are the broken heart;  
But never yet hath seen nor e'er shall see  
The naked eye thy form, as it should be;  
The mind hath made thee, as it peopled heaven,  
Even with its own desiring phantasy,  
And to a thought such shape and image given  
As haunts the unquench'd soul — parch'd, wearied,  
    wrung, and riven.

Of its own beauty is the mind diseased, 550  
And fevers into false creation. Where,  
Where are the forms the sculptor's soul hath seized?  
In him alone.<sup>69</sup> Can Nature show so fair?  
Where are the charms and virtues which we dare  
Conceive in boyhood and pursue as men,—  
The unreach'd Paradise of our despair,  
Which o'er-informs the pencil and the pen,  
And overpowers the page where it would bloom again?

Our life is a false nature,—'tis not in 559  
The harmony of things — this hard decree,  
This uneradicable taint of sin,  
This boundless upas, this all-blasting tree,  
Whose root is earth, whose leaves and branches be

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<sup>69</sup> "The light that never was on sea or land,  
The consecration and the poet's dream."

— Wordsworth.

The skies which rain their plagues on men like  
dew —

Disease, death, bondage — all the woes we see —  
And worse, the woes we see not — which throb  
through

The immedicable<sup>o</sup> soul, with heart-aches ever new.

Yet let us ponder boldly: 'tis a base 568

Abandonment of reason to resign

Our right of thought — our last and only place

Of refuge; this, at least, shall still be mine:

Though from our birth the faculty divine

Is chain'd and tortured — cabin'd, cribb'd, confined,

And bred in darkness, lest the truth should shine

Too brightly on the unprepared mind,

The beam pours in, for time and skill will couch<sup>o</sup> the  
blind.

Arches on arches! as it were that Rome, 577

Collecting the chief trophies of her line,

Would build up all her triumphs in one dome,

Her Coliseum stands; the moonbeams shine

As 't were, its natural torches,<sup>70</sup> for divine

Should be the light which streams here to illumine

This long-explored but still exhaustless mine

Of contemplation; and the azure gloom

Of an Italian night, where the deep skies assume

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<sup>70</sup> "Byron's celebrated description is better than the reality. He beheld the scene in his mind's eye, through the witchery of many intervening years, and faintly illuminated it as if with starlight instead of this broad glow of moonshine."—*Hawthorne*. The *Marble Faun* people visited the ruin when the moonlight "filled and flooded the great empty space."

Hues which have words and speak to ye of heaven,<sup>586</sup>  
 Floats o'er this vast and wondrous monument,  
 And shadows forth its glory. There is given  
 Unto the things of earth, which Time hath bent,  
 A spirit's feeling; and where he hath leant  
 His hand, but broke his scythe,<sup>71</sup> there is a power  
 And magic in the ruin'd battlement,  
 For which the palace of the present hour  
 Must yield its pomp and wait till ages are its dower.<sup>72</sup>

I see before me the Gladiator lie: 595  
 He leans upon his hand — his manly brow  
 Consents to death, but conquers agony,  
 And his droop'd head sinks gradually low,—  
 And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow  
 From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,  
 Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now  
 The arena swims around him — he is gone,  
 Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch  
 who won.

He heard it, but he heeded not: his eyes 604  
 Were with his heart, and that was far away;  
 He reck'd not of the life he lost, nor prize,  
 But where his rude hut by the Danube lay  
 There were his young barbarians all at play,  
 There was their Dacian mother; — he, their sire,  
 Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday,—  
 All this rush'd with his blood.— Shall he expire?  
 And unavenged? — Arise, ye Goths, and glut your ire!

<sup>71</sup> The object has grown old, but is not destroyed.

<sup>72</sup> Modern works of art must wait for their halo till Time has adopted them.

A ruin — yet what ruin! from its mass 613  
 Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been rear'd;  
 Yet oft the enormous skeleton <sup>73</sup> ye pass,  
 And marvel where the spoil could have appear'd.  
 Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but clear'd?  
 Alas! developed, opens the decay,  
 When the colossal fabric's form is near'd;  
 It will not bear the brightness of the day,  
 Which streams too much on all years, man, have reft  
 away.

But when the rising moon begins to climb 622  
 Its topmost arch, and gently pauses <sup>74</sup> there;  
 When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,  
 And the low night-breeze waves along the air  
 The garland-forest, <sup>75</sup> which the gray walls wear,  
 Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head;  
 When the light shines serene but doth not glare,  
 Then in this magic circle raise the dead:  
 Heroes have trod this spot — 'tis on their dust ye tread.

“While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand; 631  
 When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall;  
 And when Rome falls — the World.” From our  
 own land <sup>75a</sup>

Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall

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<sup>73</sup> The Coliseum.

<sup>74</sup> “Hast thou a charm to stay the morning star  
 In his steep course? So long he seems to pause  
 On thy bald awful head, O sovran Blanc!” — *Coleridge*.

<sup>75</sup> Vines, etc., growing from the walls —

“Mere withered wallflowers, waving overhead.”

— *Browning's Pippa Passes*.

<sup>75a</sup> Read interesting note in *Gibbon's Rome*. See index.

In Saxon times, which we are wont to call  
 Ancient; and these three mortal things are still  
 On their foundations, and unalter'd all;  
 Rome and her Ruin past Redemption's skill,  
 The World, the same wide den — of thieves, or what  
     ye will.

But lo! the dome — the vast and wondrous 640  
     dome,<sup>76</sup>

To which Diana's marvel <sup>77</sup> was a cell,—  
 Christ's mighty shrine above his martyr's tomb!  
 I have beheld the Ephesian's miracle —  
 Its columns strew the wilderness, and dwell  
 The hyena and the jackal in their shade;  
 I have beheld Sophia's <sup>78</sup> bright roofs swell  
 Their glittering mass i' the sun, and have survey'd  
 Its sanctuary the while the usurping Moslem pray'd;

But thou, of temples old or altars new, 649  
 Standest alone, with nothing like to thee —  
 Worthiest of God, the holy and the true.  
 Since Zion's desolation, when that He  
 Forsook his former city,<sup>79</sup> what could be  
 Of earthly structures, in his honor piled,  
 Of a sublimer aspect? Majesty,

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<sup>76</sup> Of St. Peter's.

<sup>77</sup> The Temple of Diana at Ephesus.

<sup>78</sup> Temple, now a mosque, built by Constantine on the occasion  
 of removing the seat of government from Rome to Byzantine. Now,

"In St. Sophia the Turkman gets,  
 And loud in air  
 Calls men to prayer  
 From the tapering summits of tall minarets."

— *Father Prout.*

<sup>79</sup> Jerusalem.



Power, Glory, Strength, and Beauty, all are aisled <sup>80</sup>  
In this eternal ark of worship undefiled.

Enter: its grandeur overwhelms thee not; 658  
'And why? it is not lessen'd; but thy mind,  
Expanded by the genius of the spot,  
Has grown colossal, and can only find  
A fit abode wherein appear enshrined  
Thy hopes of immortality; and thou  
Shalt one day, if found worthy, so defined,  
See thy God face to face, as thou dost now  
His Holy of Holies, nor be blasted by his brow.

Thou movest — but increasing with the advance, <sup>667</sup>  
Like climbing some great Alp, which still doth rise,  
Deceived by its gigantic elegance;  
Vastness which grows — but grows to harmonize —  
All musical in its immensities;  
Rich marbles — richer painting — shrines where  
flame  
The lamps of gold — and haughty dome which vies  
In air with Earth's chief structures, tho' their frame  
Sits on the firm-set <sup>81</sup> ground — and this the clouds  
must claim.

Thou seest not all; but piecemeal thou must break, <sup>676</sup>  
To separate contemplation, the great whole;  
And as the ocean many bays will make

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<sup>80</sup> An architectural term,—or, is it “isled”?

“Isled in sudden seas of light,

My heart,” etc.

— *Tennyson*.

<sup>81</sup>

“Thou sure and *firm-set* earth,

Hear not my steps, which way they walk.”

— *Macbeth*, Act II, Scene 1.

That ask the eye, so here condense thy soul  
 To more immediate objects, and control  
 Thy thoughts until thy mind hath got by heart  
 Its eloquent proportions, and unroll  
 In mighty graduations, part by part,  
 The glory which at once upon thee did not dart,

Not by its fault — but thine: our outward sense <sup>685</sup>  
 Is but of gradual grasp — and as it is  
 That what we have of feeling most intense  
 Outstrips our faint expression, even so this  
 Outshining and o'erwhelming edifice <sup>82</sup>  
 Fools our fond gaze, and greatest of the great  
 Defies at first our nature's littleness,  
 Till, growing with its growth, we thus dilate  
 Our spirits to the size of that they contemplate.

Then pause, and be enlighten'd; there is more <sup>694</sup>  
 In such a survey than the sating gaze  
 Of wonder pleased, or awe which would adore  
 The worship of the place, or the mere praise  
 Of art and its great masters, who could raise  
 What former time, nor skill nor thought could plan:  
 The fountain of sublimity displays  
 Its depth, and thence may draw the mind of man  
 Its golden sands, and learn what great conceptions can.

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<sup>82</sup> " Looking up suddenly, I found mine eyes  
 Confronted with the minster's vast repose.

I entered, reverent of whatever shrine  
 Guards piety and solace for my kind  
 Or gives the soul a moment's truce of God."

— *Lowell's The Cathedral.*

But where is he, the Pilgrim <sup>83</sup> of my song, 703  
 The being who upheld it through the past? —  
 Methinks he cometh late and tarries long.  
 He is no more — these breathings are his last;  
 His wanderings done, his visions ebbing fast,  
 And he himself as nothing: — if he was  
 Aught but a phantasy, and could be class'd  
 With forms which live and suffer — let that pass;  
 His shadow fades away into Destruction's mass,

Which gathers shadow, substance, life, and all 712  
 That we inherit <sup>84</sup> in its mortal shroud,  
 And spreads the dim and universal pall  
 Through which all things grow phantom; and the  
     cloud  
 Between us sinks and all which ever glow'd,  
 Till Glory's self is twilight, and displays  
 A melancholy halo scarce allow'd  
 To hover on the verge of darkness; rays  
 Sadder than saddest night, for they distract the gaze,

And send us prying into the abyss, 721  
 To gather what we shall be when the frame  
 Shall be resolved to something less than this  
 Its wretched essence; and to dream of fame,  
 And wipe the dust from off the idle name  
 We never more shall hear,— but never more,  
 O happier thought! can we be made the same:  
 It is enough, in sooth, that *once* we bore

<sup>83</sup> Childe Harold.

<sup>84</sup> "The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
 Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve."

— Prospero, in *The Tempest*.

These fardels of the heart — the heart whose sweat  
was gore.

Lo! Nemi,<sup>85</sup> navell'd in the woody hills 730  
So far that the uprooting wind which tears,  
The oak from his foundation, and which spills  
The ocean o'er its boundary and bears  
Its foam against the skies, reluctant spares  
The oval mirror of thy glassy lake;  
And, calm as cherish'd hate, its surface wears  
A deep cold settled aspect nought can shake,  
All coil'd into itself and round, as sleeps the snake.

And near, Albano's<sup>86</sup> scarce-divided waves 739  
Shine from a sister valley; — and afar,  
The Tiber winds, and the broad ocean laves  
The Latian coast where sprung the Epic<sup>87</sup> war,  
“Arms and the Man,” whose reascending star  
Rose o'er an empire; — but beneath thy right  
Tully<sup>88</sup> reposed from Rome; — and where yon bar  
Of girdling mountains intercepts the sight  
The Sabine farm was till'd, the weary bard's<sup>89</sup> delight.

But I forget,— My pilgrim's shrine is won, 748  
And he and I must part,— so let it be,—  
His task and mine alike are nearly done:

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<sup>85</sup> From *Nemus*, a forest. “The village of Nemi (the Grove) is but an evening's ride from the comfortable inn of Albano.”— *Byron*.

<sup>86</sup> A small lake in the Alban hill. From the summit of this, “the prospect embraces all the objects alluded to in the stanza.”— *Byron*.

<sup>87</sup> A war whose burden is the two great epic poems of Greece and Rome.

<sup>88</sup> Cicero.

<sup>89</sup> Virgil.

Yet once more let us look upon the sea;  
 The Midland Ocean breaks on him and me,  
 And from the Alban Mount we now behold  
 Our friend of youth, that ocean which when we  
 Beheld it last by Calpe's <sup>90</sup> rock unfold  
 Those waves, we follow'd on till the dark Euxine roll'd

Upon the blue Symplegades: <sup>91</sup> long years — 757  
 Long, though not very many — since have done  
 Their work on both; some suffering and some tears  
 Have left us nearly where we had begun.  
 Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run;  
 We have had our reward — and it is here:  
 That we can yet feel gladden'd by the sun,  
 And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as dear  
 As if there were no man to trouble what is clear. <sup>92</sup>

Oh, that the Desert were my dwelling-place, <sup>93</sup> 766  
 With one fair Spirit for my minister,  
 That I might all forget the human race,  
 And hating no one, love but only her!  
 Ye Elements! — in whose ennobling stir  
 I feel myself exalted — can ye not  
 Accord me such a being? Do I err  
 In deeming such inhabit many a spot?  
 Though with them to converse can rarely be our lot.

There <sup>94</sup> is a pleasure in the pathless woods, 775

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<sup>90</sup> Strait of Gibraltar.

<sup>91</sup> Small islands at the mouth of the Bosphorus.

<sup>92</sup> A "reward," verily.

<sup>93</sup> "Oh, for a lodge in some vast wilderness!" — *Cowper*.

<sup>94</sup> Will not the reader favor himself by memorizing these concluding stanzas?

There is a rapture on the lonely shore ;  
 There is society, where none intrudes,  
 By the deep Sea, and music in its roar :  
 I love not Man the less, but Nature more,  
 From these our interviews, in which I steal  
 From all I may be, or have been before,  
 'To mingle with the Universe,<sup>95</sup> and feel  
 What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean — roll ! 784  
 Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain :  
 Man marks the earth with ruin — his control  
 Stops with the shore ; — upon the watery plain  
 The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain  
 A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,  
 When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,  
 He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,  
 Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths,— thy fields 793  
 Are not a spoil for him,— thou dost arise  
 And shake him from thee ; the vile strength he wields  
 For earth's destruction, thou dost all despise,  
 Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,  
 And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray,  
 And howling, to his gods, where haply lies  
 His petty hope in some near port or bay,  
 And dashest him again to earth : — there let him lay.<sup>96</sup>

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls 802

<sup>95</sup> " He is made one with Nature," etc.—*Adonais*, line 370, *et seq.*

<sup>96</sup> " Nice customs curtsy to great kings."—*Henry V.*, Act V, Scene 1, line 240.



Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,  
 And monarchs tremble in their capitals,—  
 The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make  
 Their clay creator the vain title take  
 Of lord of thee and arbiter of war,—  
 These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,  
 They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar  
 Alike the Armada's <sup>97</sup> pride or spoils of Trafalgar.<sup>98</sup>

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save 811  
 thee; —  
 Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?  
 Thy waters wash'd them power while they were free,  
 And many a tyrant since; their shores obey  
 The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay  
 Has dried up realms to deserts: — not so thou;  
 Unchangeable, save to thy wild waves' play,  
 Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow:  
 Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form<sup>820</sup>  
 Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,  
 Calm or convulsed — in breeze, or gale, or storm,  
 Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime  
 Dark-heaving; — boundless, endless, and sublime,  
 The image of Eternity, the throne  
 Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime  
 The monsters of the deep are made; each zone  
 Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

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<sup>97</sup> The Spanish Armada, destroyed by the English fleet, with the efficient aid of Neptune.

<sup>98</sup> One of Nelson's great naval victories.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy 829  
 Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be  
 Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy  
 I wanton'd with thy breakers — they to me  
 Were a delight; and if the freshening sea  
 Made them a terror, 'twas a pleasing fear,  
 For I was as it were a child of thee,  
 And trusted to thy billows far and near,  
 And laid my hand upon thy mane — as I do here.

My task is done — my song hath ceased — my 838  
 theme  
 Has died into an echo; it is fit  
 The spell should break of this protracted dream.  
 The torch shall be extinguish'd which hath lit  
 My midnight lamp — and what is writ, is writ; —  
 Would it were worthier! but I am not now  
 That which I have been — and my visions flit  
 Less palpably before me — and the glow  
 Which in my spirit dwelt is fluttering, faint, and low.

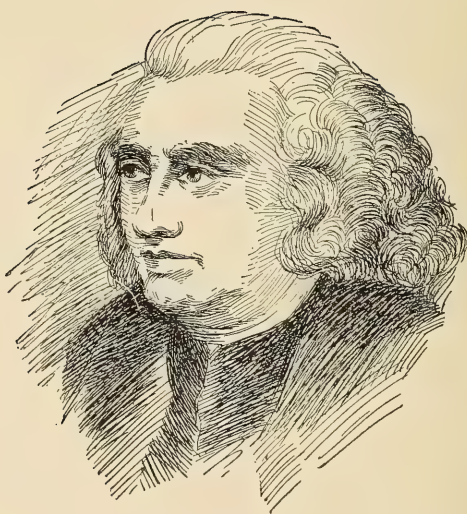
Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been,— 847  
 A sound which makes us linger,— yet — farewell!  
 Ye who have traced the Pilgrim to the scene  
 Which is his last, if in your memories dwell  
 A thought which once was his, if on ye swell  
 A single recollection, not in vain  
 He wore his sandal-shoon and scallop-shell; <sup>99</sup>  
 Farewell! with *him* alone may rest the pain,  
 If such there were,— with *you*, the moral of his strain!

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<sup>99</sup> Badges of pilgrims.

“How should I your true love know  
 From another oon?  
 By his cockle hat and staff,  
 And his sandle shoon.”

— *Hamlet*, Act IV, Scene 5.



DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON

## DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

1709-1784.

THROUGHOUT that part of our globe where English is the mother tongue there are probably not more than a half dozen names of what we may call literary people more generally known than is the name, Dr. Johnson; and this fame, for it is fame of a pure and noble type, is not based upon wealth, high descent, well-improved opportunities to play a brilliant part in the public eye, but upon his simple mode of life in the light of common day, upon his writings, and pre-eminently upon his talk.

Possibly, nay certainly, one book written about Johnson, what he did, what he said; sometimes, when they had a chance, what others in his presence said, has done more to fix and widen that reputation than any book of his own authorship. Critics have dipped deep into their stock of laudatory phrases when speaking of Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. "Johnson," said Burke, "appears far greater in Boswell's books than in his own."

Among his prose works are the *Rambler*, a periodical upon the general plan of Addison's *Spectator*; *Rasselas*, a story which he wrote in one week to obtain money to pay the burial expenses of his mother; a *Dictionary of the English Language*, first published in 1755, relative to which Johnson's letter to Lord Chesterfield, prompted by a patronizing article of his lordship, has been termed "English literature's declaration of independence;" *The Lives of the Poets*, a series of biographies of exceeding interest, abounding in sterling literary criticism, but amid the current thereof the reader may well reserve the right

of private opinion; an edition of Shakespeare's Plays; *Reports of the Senate of Lilliput*, otherwise reports of many of the great speeches in Parliament by Pitt and others, which are said to be largely in debt to the reporter; and *A Journey to the Hebrides*, concerning which there is a note in the introduction to this volume.

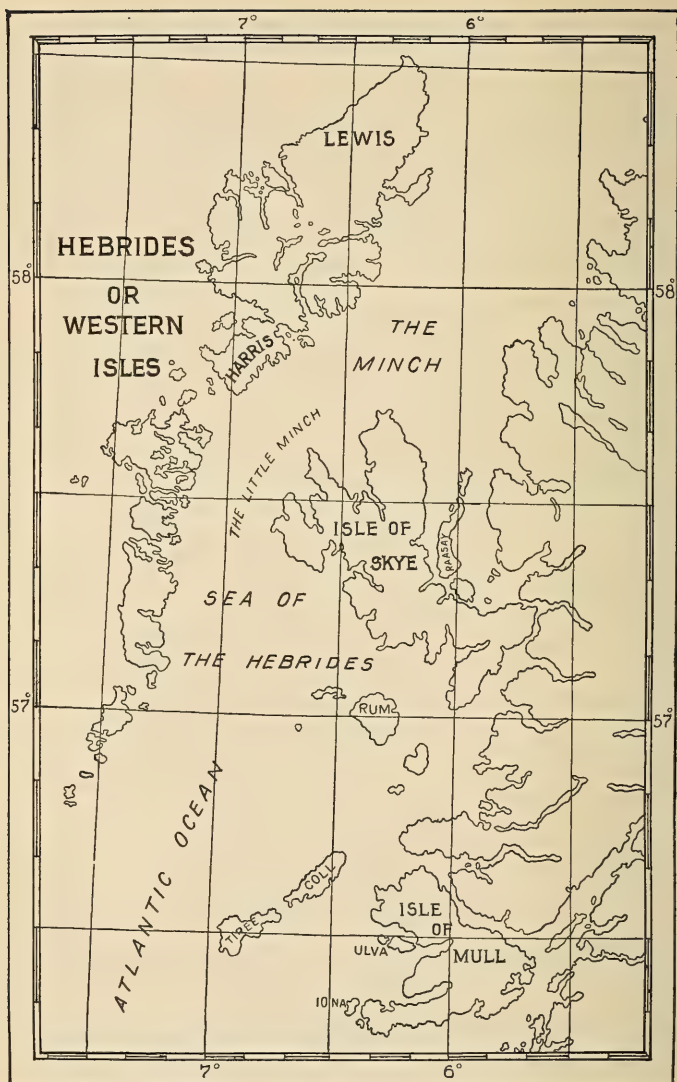
Though his muse did not soar, Johnson wrote some poems. One of these, the *Vanity of Human Wishes*, has furnished the language one of its well-worn phrases. Of Charles XII. of Sweden it says, likewise ending the poem:—

He left a name at which the world grew pale,  
To point a moral, or adorn a tale.

Familiarly associated with Johnson were Garrick, Reynolds, Boswell, Burke, Goldsmith, and others, names familiar to our ears as household words, members of the renowned "Literary Club," and Johnson as of right divine at the head of the table. Here is the way the bare thought of one of those gatherings struck Thackeray: "How contemptible the story of the George III Court squabblers is beside the recorded talk of dear old Johnson! Ah, I would have liked a night at the Turk's Head, even though bad news had arrived from the Colonies, and Dr. Johnson was growling against the rebels." And this note closes with a few words from Macaulay: "What a singular destiny has been that of this remarkable man! To be regarded in his own age as a classic, and in ours as a companion—to receive from his contemporaries that full homage which men of genius have in general received only from posterity—to be more intimately known to posterity than other men are

known to their contemporaries." This is followed by a prediction that "those peculiarities of manner, and that careless table-talk, the memory of which, he probably thought, would die with him, are likely to be remembered as long as the English language is spoken in any quarter of the globe."





# A Journey to the Hebrides

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1 I HAD desired to visit the Hebrides, or Western Islands of Scotland, so long, that I scarcely remember how the wish was originally excited; and was in the autumn of the year 1773 induced to undertake the journey, by finding in Mr. Boswell<sup>1</sup> a companion whose acuteness would help my inquiry, and whose gaiety of conversation and civility of manners are sufficient to counteract the inconveniences of travel in countries less hospitable than we have passed.

2 On the eighteenth of August we left Edinburgh, a city too well known to admit description, and directed our course northward, along the eastern coast of Scotland, accompanied the first day by another gentleman, who could stay with us only long enough to show us how much we lost at separation.

3 As we crossed the Frith of Forth,<sup>2</sup> our curiosity was attracted by —

## INCH<sup>3</sup> KEITH,

a small island, which neither of my companions had ever visited, though, lying within their view, it had all their lives solicited their notice. Here, by climbing with some difficulty over shattered crags, we made the first experiment of unfrequented coasts. Inch Keith is nothing more than a rock covered with a thin layer of earth, not wholly bare of grass, and very fertile of thistles. A

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<sup>1</sup> The author of one of the world's most famous biographies, Boswell's *Life of Johnson*.

<sup>2</sup> The reader should have a map of Scotland constantly at hand.

<sup>3</sup> an island.

small herd of cows grazes annually upon it in the summer. It seems never to have afforded to man or beast a permanent habitation.

4 We found only the ruins of a small fort, not so injured by time but that it might be easily restored to its former state. One of the stones had this inscription:

*Maria Reg. MDLXIV.*<sup>4</sup>

It has probably been neglected from the time that the whole island had the same king.<sup>5</sup>

5 We left this little island with our thoughts employed a while on the different appearance that it would have made if it had been placed at the same distance from London, with the same facility of approach; with what emulation of price a few rocky acres would have been purchased, and with what expensive industry they would have been cultivated and adorned.

6 Though we were yet in the most populous part of Scotland, and at so small a distance from the capital, we met few passengers.

The roads are neither rough nor dirty; and it affords a southern stranger a new kind of pleasure to travel so commodiously° without the interruption of toll-gates. Where the bottom is rocky, as it seems commonly to be in Scotland, a smooth way is made indeed with great labor, but it never wants repair. The carriages in common use are small carts, drawn each by one little horse; and a man seems to derive some degree of dignity and importance from the reputation of possessing a two-horse cart.

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<sup>4</sup> Queen Mary, 1564 — "Mary Queen of Scots."

<sup>5</sup> James I., of England; James VI., of Scotland.

## ST. ANDREWS.

7 At an hour somewhat late we came to St. Andrews, and found that, by the interposition<sup>o</sup> of some invisible friend, lodgings had been provided for us at the house of one of the professors, whose easy civility quickly made us forget that we were strangers; and in the whole time of our stay we were gratified by every mode of kindness, and entertained with all the elegance of lettered hospitality.

8 In the morning we rose to perambulate<sup>o</sup> a city which only history shows to have once flourished, and surveyed the ruins of ancient magnificence, of which even the ruins cannot long be visible, unless some care be taken to preserve them; and where is the pleasure of preserving such mournful memorials? They have been till very lately so much neglected, that every man carried away the stones who fancied that he wanted them.

9 The cathedral, of which the foundations may be still traced, and a small part of the wall is standing, appears to have been a spacious and majestic building, not unsuitable to the primacy of the kingdom. Of the architecture, the poor remains can hardly exhibit, even to an artist, a sufficient specimen. It was demolished, as is well known, in the tumult and violence of Knox's<sup>6</sup> reformation.

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<sup>6</sup> The reader may need to be reminded of Johnson's intense prejudice against the Scotch reformation, and especially against its great leader, John Knox. I quote a few sentences from Froude's "The Influence of the Reformation on the Scottish Character," as a sort of antidote. "Good reason had Scotland to be proud of Knox. He only, in this wild crisis, saved the Kirk which he had founded, and saved with it Scottish and English freedom. But for Knox, and what he was able still to do, it is almost certain that the Duke of Alva's army would have landed on the eastern coast."

10 The city of St. Andrews gradually decayed: one of its streets is now lost; and in those that remain there is the silence and solitude of inactive indigence<sup>o</sup> and gloomy depopulation.<sup>o</sup>

The university, within a few years, consisted of three colleges, but is now reduced to two. The chapel of the alienated<sup>o</sup> college is yet standing, a fabric not inelegant of external structure: but I was always, by some civil excuse, hindered from entering it. A decent attempt, as I was since told, has been made to convert it into a kind of greenhouse, by planting its area with shrubs. To what use it will next be put I have no pleasure in conjecturing. It is something that its present state is at least not ostentatiously<sup>o</sup> displayed. Where there is yet shame, there may in time be virtue.

11 The dissolution of St. Leonard's College was doubtless necessary; but of that necessity there is reason to complain. It is surely not without just reproach, that a nation, of which the commerce is hourly extending, and the wealth increasing, denies any participation of its prosperity to its literary societies; and while its merchants or its nobles are raising palaces, suffers its universities to molder into dust.

12 In walking among the ruins of these religious buildings, we came to two vaults over which had formerly stood the house of the sub-prior. One of the vaults was inhabited by an old woman, who claimed the right of abode there as the widow of a man whose ancestors had possessed the same gloomy mansion for no less than four generations. The right, however it began, was considered as established by legal prescription,<sup>7</sup> and the old woman

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<sup>7</sup> "The memory of man ran not to the contrary."

lives undisturbed. She thinks, however, that she has a claim to something more than sufferance; for as her husband's name was Bruce,<sup>8</sup> she is allied to royalty,<sup>9</sup> and told Mr. Boswell that when there were persons of quality in the place, she was distinguished by some notice; that indeed she is now neglected, but she spins a thread, has the company of a cat, and is troublesome to nobody.

13 Having now seen whatever this ancient city offered to our curiosity, we left it with good wishes, having reason to be highly pleased with the attention that was paid us. But whoever surveys the world must see many things that give him pain.

ABERBROTHICK.

14 As we knew sorrow and wishes to be vain, it was now our business to mind our way. The roads of Scotland afford little diversion to the traveler, who seldom sees himself either encountered or overtaken, and who has nothing to contemplate but grounds that have no visible boundaries, or are separated by walls of loose stone. From the banks of the Tweed to St. Andrews I had never seen a single tree which I did not believe to have grown up far within the present century.<sup>9</sup> Now and then about a gentleman's house stands a small plantation, which in Scotch is called a *policy*, but of these there are few, and those few all very young. The variety of sun and shade is here utterly unknown. There is no tree for either shelter or timber. A tree might be a show in Scotland,

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<sup>8</sup> They claimed kin with the immortal Robert Bruce, once king.

<sup>9</sup> This calls up the depressing communication of Queen Elizabeth to the Scotch Council in that "wild crisis" (see note to 9), that if they hurt a hair of Queen Mary's head, she would harry their country, and hang them all on the trees round the town, if she could find any trees there for that purpose.



as a horse in Venice. At St. Andrews Mr. Boswell found only one, and recommended it to my notice; I told him that it was rough and low, and looked as if I thought so. "This," said he, "is nothing to another a few miles off." I was still less delighted to hear that another tree was not to be seen nearer. "Nay," said a gentleman that stood by, "I know but of this and that tree in the county."

15 The lowlands of Scotland had once undoubtedly an equal portion of woods with other countries. Forests are everywhere gradually diminished, as architecture and cultivation prevail by the increase of people and the introduction of arts. But I believe few regions have been denuded like this, where many centuries must have passed in waste without the least thought of future supply. Davies observes in his account of Ireland, that no Irishman had ever planted an orchard. For that negligence some excuse might be drawn from an unsettled state of life, and the instability of property; but in Scotland possession has long been secure, and inheritance regular; yet it may be doubted whether before the Union<sup>10</sup> any man between Edinburgh and England had ever set a tree.

#### MONTROSE.

16 Leaving these fragments of magnificence, we traveled on to Montrose, which we surveyed in the morning, and found it well built, airy, and clean. The townhouse is a handsome fabric with a portico. We then went to view the English chapel, and found a small church, clean to a degree unknown in any other part of Scotland, with

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<sup>10</sup> In 1707, Queen Anne reigning, the two countries were united under one parliament, and with a common name, Great Britain.

commodious<sup>o</sup> galleries, and, what was yet less expected, with an organ.

At our inn we did not find a reception such as we thought proportionate to the commercial opulence<sup>o</sup> of the place; but Mr. Boswell desired me to observe that the innkeeper was an Englishman, and I then defended him as well as I could.

17 When I had proceeded thus far, I had opportunities of observing what I had never heard, that there were many beggars in Scotland. In Edinburgh the proportion is, I think, not less than in London, and in the smaller places it is far greater than in English towns of the same extent. It must, however, be allowed that they are not importunate,<sup>o</sup> nor clamorous. They solicit silently, or very modestly, and therefore, though their behavior may strike with more force the heart of a stranger, they are certainly in danger of missing the attention of their countrymen.

18 The road from Montrose exhibited a continuation of the same appearances. The country is still naked, the hedges are of stone, and the fields so generally plowed that it is hard to imagine where grass is found for the horses that till them. The harvest, which was almost ripe, appeared very plentiful.

19 Early in the afternoon Mr. Boswell observed that we were at no great distance from the house of Lord<sup>11</sup> Monboddo. The magnetism of his conversation easily drew us out of our way, and the entertainment which we received would have been a sufficient recompense for a much greater deviation.

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<sup>11</sup> A Scotch justice; wrote on the origin of language; believed man to be descended from the monkey.

20 The roads beyond Edinburgh, as they are less frequented, must be expected to grow gradually rougher; but they were hitherto by no means incommodious. We traveled on with the gentle pace of a Scotch driver, who having no rivals in expedition,<sup>o</sup> neither gives himself nor his horses unnecessary trouble. We did not affect the impatience we did not feel, but were satisfied with the company of each other, as well riding in the chaise, as sitting at an inn. The night and the day are equally solitary and equally safe; for where there are so few travelers, why should there be robbers?

ABERDEEN.

21 We came somewhat late to Aberdeen, and found the inn so full, that we had some difficulty in obtaining admission, till Mr. Boswell made himself known: his name overpowered all objection, and we found a very good house and civil treatment.

22 To write of the cities of our own island with the solemnity of geographical description, as if we had been cast upon a newly discovered coast, has the appearance of a very frivolous ostentation<sup>o</sup>; yet as Scotland is little known to the greater part of those who may read these observations, it is not superfluous<sup>o</sup> to relate, that under the name of Aberdeen are comprised two towns, standing about a mile distant from each other, but governed, I think, by the same magistrates.

23 In Old Aberdeen stands the King's College, of which the first president was Hector Boece, or Boethius,<sup>12</sup> who may be justly revered as one of the revivers of elegant learning. When he studied at Paris, he was acquainted

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<sup>12</sup> His "Consolations of Philosophy" was translated into English by King Alfred.

with Erasmus, who afterward gave him a public testimony of his esteem, by inscribing to him a catalogue of his works. The style of Boethius, though, perhaps, not always rigorously pure, is formed with great diligence upon ancient models, and wholly uninfected with monastic barbarity. His history is written with elegance and vigor, but his fabulousness and credulity are justly blamed. His fabulousness, if he was the author of the fictions, is a fault for which no apology can be made; but his credulity may be excused in an age when all men were credulous. Learning was then rising on the world; but ages so long accustomed to darkness were too much dazzled with its light to see anything distinctly. The first race of scholars in the fifteenth century, and some time after, were, for the most part, learning to speak, rather than to think, and were therefore more studious of elegance than of truth. The contemporaries of Boethius thought it sufficient to know what the ancients had delivered. The examination of tenets<sup>o</sup> and of facts was reserved for another generation.

**24** Boethius, as president of the university, enjoyed a revenue of forty Scottish marks, about two pounds four shillings and sixpence of sterling money. In the present age of trade and taxes, it is difficult even for the imagination so to raise the value of money, or so to diminish the demands of life, as to suppose four and forty shillings a year an honorable stipend; yet it was probably equal, not only to the needs, but to the rank of Boethius. The wealth of England was undoubtedly to that of Scotland more than five to one, and it is known that Henry the Eighth, among whose faults avarice<sup>13</sup> was never reckoned,

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<sup>13</sup> He did not follow his father's example.

granted to Roger Ascham,<sup>14</sup> as a reward of his learning, a pension of ten pounds a year.

25 We came to Aberdeen on Saturday, August 21. On Monday we were invited into the townhall, where I had the freedom of the city given me by the Lord Provost.<sup>15</sup> The honor conferred had all the decorations° that politeness could add, and, what I am afraid I should not have had to say of any city south of the Tweed, I found no petty officer bowing for a fee.

The parchment containing the record of admission is, with the seal appending, fastened to a riband, and worn for one day by the new citizen in his hat.

26 The road beyond Aberdeen grew more stony, and continued equally naked of all vegetable decoration. We traveled over a tract of ground near the sea, which, not long ago, suffered a very uncommon and unexpected calamity. The sand of the shore was raised by a tempest in such quantities, and carried to such a distance, that an estate was overwhelmed and lost. Such and so hopeless was the barrenness superinduced, that the owner, when he was required to pay the usual tax, desired rather to resign° the ground.

#### SLANES CASTLE.

27 We came in the afternoon to Slanes Castle, built upon the margin of the sea, so that the walls of one of the towers seem only a continuation of a perpendicular rock, the foot of which is beaten by the waves. To walk round the house seemed impracticable. From the windows the eye wanders over the sea that separates Scotland from

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<sup>14</sup> Teacher of Queen Elizabeth and Lady Jane Grey; author of *The Scholemaster*, and *Toxophilus*, both wise and learned books.

<sup>15</sup> Chief executive officer of the city.

Norway, and when the winds beat with violence, must enjoy all the terrific grandeur <sup>16</sup> of the tempestuous ocean. I would not for my amusement wish for a storm; but as storms, whether wished or not, will sometimes happen, I may say, without violation of humanity, that I should willingly look out upon them from Slanes Castle.

28 Next morning we continued our journey, pleased with our reception at Slanes Castle, of which we had now leisure to recount the grandeur and the elegance; for our way afforded us few topics of conversation. The ground was neither uncultivated nor unfruitful; but it was still all arable. Of flocks or herds there was no appearance. I had now traveled two hundred miles in Scotland, and seen only one tree not younger than myself.

## BANFF.

29 We dined this day at the house of Mr. Frazer, of Streichon, who showed us in his grounds some stones yet standing of a Druidical<sup>o</sup> circle, and what I began to think more worthy of notice, some forest trees of full growth.

## ELGIN.

30 Finding nothing to detain us at Banff, we set out in the morning, and having breakfasted at Cullen, about noon came to Elgin, where, in the inn that we supposed the best, a dinner was set before us which we could not eat. This was the first time, and except one the last, that I found any reason to complain of a Scotch table; and such disappointments, I suppose, must be expected in

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<sup>16</sup> "By heaven, it is a splendid sight to see,  
For one who hath no friend, no brother there!"

— *Byron.*



every country where there is no great frequency of travelers.

31 The ruins of the cathedral of Elgin afforded us another proof of the waste of reformation. There is enough yet remaining to show that it was once magnificent. Its whole plot is easily traced. The church of Elgin had, in the intestine<sup>o</sup> tumults of the barbarous ages, been laid waste by the irruption of a Highland chief, whom the bishop had offended; but it was gradually restored to the state of which the traces may be now discerned, and was at last not destroyed by the tumultuous violence of Knox, but more shamefully suffered to dilapidate by deliberate robbery and frigid indifference. There is till extant,<sup>o</sup> in the books of the council, an order, of which I cannot remember the date, but which was doubtless issued after the reformation, directing that the lead,<sup>17</sup> which covers the two cathedrals of Elgin and Aberdeen, shall be taken away, and converted into money for the support of the army. A Scotch army was in those times very cheaply kept; yet the lead of two churches must have borne so small a proportion to any military expense, that it is hard not to believe the reason alleged to be merely popular, and the money intended for some private purse. The order, however, was obeyed; the two churches were stripped, and the lead was shipped to be sold in Holland. I hope every reader will rejoice that this cargo of sacrilege was lost at sea.

32 Let us not, however, make too much haste to despise our neighbors. Our own cathedrals are moldering by unregarded dilapidation.<sup>o</sup> It seems to be part of the

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<sup>17</sup> To use a word of Burke's, they "unplumbed" the Cathedrals.

despicable philosophy of the time to despise monuments of sacred magnificence, and we are in danger of doing that deliberately, which the Scots did not do but in the unsettled state of an imperfect constitution. Those who had once uncovered the cathedrals never wished to cover them again; and being thus made useless, they were first neglected, and perhaps, as the stone was wanted, afterward demolished.<sup>o</sup>

FORES.— CALDER.— FORT GEORGE.

**33** We went forward the same day to Fores the town to which Macbeth was traveling when he met the weird sisters in his way.<sup>18</sup> This to an Englishman is classic ground. Our imaginations were heated, and our thoughts recalled to their old amusements.

**34** We had now a prelude<sup>o</sup> to the Highlands. We began to leave fertility and culture behind us, and saw for a great length of road nothing but heath; yet at Fochabers, a seat belonging to the Duke of Gordon, there is an orchard, which in Scotland I had never seen before, with some timber-trees, and a plantation of oaks.

**35** At Fores we found good accommodation, but nothing worthy of particular remark, and next morning entered upon the road on which Macbeth heard the fatal prediction; <sup>19</sup> but we traveled on, not interrupted by promises of kingdoms, and came to Nairn, a royal burgh, which, if

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<sup>18</sup> And saluted them with:—

“How far is’t called to Fores?” Then without waiting for the information, the sight being more interesting, he thought aloud:—

“What are these

So withered and so wild in their attire,  
That look not like th’ inhabitants o’ th’ earth,  
And yet are on’t?”

<sup>19</sup> The witches “all-hailed” him, Glamis, Cawdor, King hereafter.

once it flourished, is now in a state of miserable decay; but I know not whether its chief annual magistrate has not still the title of Lord Provost.

36 At Nairn we may fix the verge of the Highlands; for here I first saw peat fires, and first heard the Erse language. We had no motive to stay longer than to breakfast, and went forward to the house of Mr. Macaulay, the minister who published an account of St. Kilda, and by his direction visited Calder Castle, from which Macbeth drew his second title. It has been formerly a place of strength. The drawbridge is still to be seen, but the moat is now dry.

37 We were favored by a gentleman, who lives in the castle, with a letter to one of the officers at Fort George, which being the most regular fortification in the island, well deserves the notice of a traveler who has never traveled before. We went thither next day, found a very kind reception, were led round the works by a gentleman who explained the use of every part, and entertained by Sir Eyre Coote,<sup>20</sup> the governor, with such elegance of conversation as left us no attention to the delicacies of his table.

#### INVERNESS.

38 Inverness was the last place which had a regular communication by high roads with the southern counties.

Here is a castle, called the Castle of Macbeth, the walls of which are yet standing. It was no very capa-

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<sup>20</sup> Commander of the British army in India. "The appearance of Eyre Coote checked the progress of Hyder Ali, and in 1781 the victory of Porto Novo hurled him back into the fastnesses of Mysore."—*Green*.

cious edifice, but stands upon a rock so high and steep, that I think it was once not accessible but by the help of ladders, or a bridge. Over against it, on another hill, was a fort built by Cromwell, now totally demolished; for no faction of Scotland loved the name of Cromwell, or had any desire to continue his memory.

Yet what the Romans did to other nations, was in a great degree done by Cromwell to the Scots; he civilized them by conquest, and introduced by useful violence the arts of peace. I was told at Aberdeen that the people learned from Cromwell's soldiers to make shoes and to plant kail.

39 How they lived without kail, it is not easy to guess; they cultivate hardly any other plant for common tables, and when they had not kail they probably had nothing. The numbers that go barefoot are still sufficient to show that shoes may be spared; they are not yet considered as necessaries of life; for tall boys, not otherwise meanly dressed, run without them in the streets; and in the islands the sons of gentlemen pass several of their first years with naked feet.

40 I know not whether it be not peculiar to the Scots to have attained the liberal, without the manual, arts, to have excelled in ornamental knowledge, and to have wanted not only the elegancies, but the conveniences of common life. Literature, soon after its revival, found its way to Scotland, and from the middle of the sixteenth century almost to the middle of the seventeenth, the politer studies were very diligently pursued.

Yet men thus ingenious and inquisitive were content to live in total ignorance of the trades by which human wants are supplied, and to supply them by the grossest

means. Till the Union<sup>21</sup> made them acquainted with English manners, the culture of their lands was unskillful, and their domestic life unformed.

41 Since they have known that their condition was capable of improvement, their progress in useful knowledge has been rapid and uniform. What remains to be done they will quickly do, and then wonder, like me, why that which was so necessary and so easy was so long delayed. But they must be forever content to owe to the English that elegance and culture, which, if they had been vigilant and active, perhaps the English might have owed to them.

42 Here the appearance of life began to alter. I had seen a few women with plaids at Aberdeen: but at Inverness the Highland manners are common. There is, I think, a kirk in which only the Erse language is used. There is likewise an English chapel, but meanly built, where on Sunday we saw a very decent congregation.

43 We were now to bid farewell to the luxury of traveling, and to enter a country, upon which perhaps no wheel has ever rolled. We could indeed have used our post-chaise one day longer, but we could have hired no horses beyond Inverness, and we were not so sparing of ourselves as to lead them, merely that we might have one day longer the indulgence of a carriage.

44 At Inverness, therefore, we procured three horses for ourselves and a servant, and one more for our baggage, which was no very heavy load. We found in the course of our journey the convenience of having disencumbered ourselves, by laying aside whatever we could spare; for

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<sup>21</sup> The Doctor does not allow one to forget what he thinks Scotland owes to England.

it is not to be imagined without experience, how in climbing crags, and treading bogs, and winding through narrow and obstructed passages, a little bulk will hinder, and a little weight will burden.

## LOCH NESS.

45 We took two Highlanders to run beside us, partly to show us the way, and partly to take back from the seaside the horses, of which they were the owners. One of them was a man of great liveliness and activity, of whom his companion said, that he would tire any horse in Inverness. Both of them were civil and ready-handed. Civility seems part of the national character of Highlanders. Every chieftain is a monarch, and politeness, the natural product of royal government, is diffused from the laird through the whole clan. But they are not commonly dexterous<sup>o</sup>; their narrowness of life confines them to a few operations, and they are accustomed to endure little wants more than to remove them.

46 We mounted our steeds on the 28th of August, and directed our guides to conduct us to Fort Augustus. It is built at the head of Loch Ness, of which Inverness stands at the outlet. The way between them has been cut by the soldiers, and the greater part of it runs along a rock, leveled with great labor and exactness, near the water-side.

47 Most of this day's journey was very pleasant. The day, though bright, was not hot; and the appearance of the country, if I had not seen the Peak, would have been wholly new. We went upon a surface so hard and level, that we had little care to hold the bridle, and were therefore at full leisure for contemplation. On the left were



high and steepy rocks shaded with birch, the hardy native of the north, and covered with fern or heath. On the right the limpid waters of Loch Ness were beating their bank, and waving their surface by a gentle agitation. Beyond them were rocks sometimes covered with verdure, and sometimes towering in horrid nakedness. Now and then we espied a little cornfield, which served to impress more strongly the general barrenness.

48 It was said at Fort Augustus, that Loch Ness is open in the hardest winters, though a lake not far from it is covered with ice. In discussing these exceptions from the course of nature, the first question is, whether the fact be justly stated. That which is strange is delightful, and a pleasing error is not willingly detected. Accuracy of narration is not very common, and there are few so rigidly philosophical, as not to represent as perpetual what is only frequent, or as constant what is really casual.

49 Near the way, by the water-side, we espied a cottage. This was the first Highland hut that I had seen; and as our business was with life and manners, we were willing to visit it. To enter a habitation without leave seems to be not considered here as rudeness or intrusion. The old laws of hospitality still give this license to a stranger.

50 A hut is constructed with loose stones, ranged for the most part with some tendency to circularity. It must be placed where the wind cannot act upon it with violence, because it has no cement; and where the water will run easily away, because it has no floor but the naked ground. The wall, which is commonly about six feet high, declines from the perpendicular a little inward. No light is admitted, but at the entrance, and through a hole in

the thatch, which gives vent to the smoke. This hole is not directly over the fire, lest the rain should extinguish it, and the smoke therefore naturally fills the place before it escapes. Such is the general structure of the houses in which one of the nations of this opulent and powerful island has been hitherto content to live. Huts, however, are not more uniform than palaces; and this which we were inspecting was very far from one of the meanest, for it was divided into several apartments; and its inhabitants possessed such property as a pastoral poet might exalt into riches.

## FALL OF FIERS.

51 Toward evening we crossed, by a bridge, the river which makes the celebrated Fall of Fiers. The country at the bridge strikes the imagination with all the gloom and grandeur of Siberian solitude. The way makes a flexure, and the mountains, covered with trees, rise at once on the left hand and in the front.

But we visited the place at an unseasonable time, and found it divested of its dignity and terror. Nature never gives everything at once. A long continuance of dry weather, which made the rest of the way easy and delightful, deprived us of the pleasure expected from the Fall of Fiers. The river having now no water but what the springs supply, showed us only a swift current, clear and shallow, fretting over the asperities of the rocky bottom.

The way now grew less easy, descending by an uneven declivity, but without either dirt or danger. We did not arrive at Fort Augustus till it was late. Mr. Boswell, who between his father's merit and his own, is sure of

reception wherever he comes, sent a servant before to beg admission and entertainment for that night.

FORT AUGUSTUS.

52 In the morning we viewed the fort, which is much less than that of St. George, and is said to be commanded by the neighboring hills. It was not long ago taken by the Highlanders. But its situation seems well chosen for pleasure, if not for strength; it stands at the head of the lake, and, by a sloop of sixty tons, is supplied from Inverness with great convenience.

53 We were now to cross the Highlands toward the western coast, and to content ourselves with such accommodations, as a way so little frequented could afford.

The country is totally denuded<sup>o</sup> of its wood, but the stumps both of oaks and firs, which are still found, show that it has been once a forest of large timber. I do not remember that we saw any animals, but we were told that, in the mountains, there are stags, roebucks, goats, and rabbits.

We did not perceive that this tract was possessed by human beings, except that once we saw a cornfield, in which a lady was walking with some gentlemen. Their house was certainly at no great distance, but so situated that we could not descry it.

54 Passing on through the dreariness of solitude, we found a party of soldiers from the fort, working on the road, under the superintendence of a sergeant. We told them how kindly we had been treated at the garrison, and as we were enjoying the benefit of their labors, begged leave to show our gratitude by a small present.

## ANOECH.

**55** Early in the afternoon we came to Anoch, a village in Glenmollison of three huts, one of which is distinguished by a chimney. Here we were to dine and lodge, and were conducted through the first room, that had the chimney, into another lighted by a small glass window. The landlord attended us with great civility, and told us what he could give us to eat and drink. I found some books on a shelf, among which were a volume or more of "Prideaux's Connexion."

This I mentioned as something unexpected, and perceived that I did not please him. I praised the propriety of his language, and was answered that I need not wonder, for he had learned it by grammar.

**56** By subsequent opportunities of observation, I found that my host's diction<sup>o</sup> had nothing peculiar. Those Highlanders that can speak English, commonly speak it well, with few of the words, and little of the tone by which a Scotchman is distinguished. Their language seems to have been learned in the army or the navy, or by some communication with those who could give them good examples of accent and pronunciation. By their Lowland neighbors they would not willingly be taught; for they have long considered them as a mean and degenerate race. These prejudices are wearing fast away; but so much of them still remains, that when I asked a very learned minister in the islands, which they considered as their most savage clans, "Those," said he, "that live next the Lowlands."

**57** Some time after dinner we were surprised by the entrance of a young woman, not inelegant either in

mien or dress, who asked us whether we would have tea. We found that she was the daughter of our host, and desired her to make it. Her conversation, like her appearance, was gentle and pleasing. We knew that the girls of the Highlands are all gentlewomen, and treated her with great respect, which she received as customary and due, and was neither elated<sup>o</sup> by it, nor confused, but repaid my civilities without embarrassment, and told me how much I honored her country by coming to survey it.

58 In the evening the soldiers, whom we had passed on the road, came to spend at our inn the little money that we had given them. They had the true military impatience of coin in their pockets, and had marched at least six miles to find the first place where liquor could be bought. Having never been before in a place so wild and unfrequented, I was glad of their arrival, because I knew that we had made them friends, and to gain still more of their good-will, we went to them where they were carousing<sup>o</sup> in the barn, and added something to our former gift. All that we gave was not much, but it detained them in the barn either merry or quarreling, the whole night, and in the morning they went back to their work, with great indignation at the bad qualities of whisky.

59 We had gained so much the favor of our host, that when we left his house in the morning, he walked by us a great way, and entertained us with conversation both on his own condition, and that of the country. His life seemed to be merely pastoral,<sup>o</sup> except that he differed from some of the ancient Nomades<sup>o</sup> in having a settled dwelling. His wealth consists of one hundred sheep, as many goats, twelve milk cows, and twenty-eight bees ready for the drover.

60 From him we first heard of the general dissatisfaction which is now driving the Highlanders into the other hemisphere; and when I asked him whether they would stay at home if they were well treated, he answered with indignation, that no man willingly left his native country. Of the farm, which he himself occupied, the rent had, in twenty-five years, been advanced from five to twenty pounds, which he found himself so little able to pay that he would be glad to try his fortune in some other place.

61 Our host having amused us for a time, resigned us to our guides. The journey of this day was long, not that the distance was great, but that the way was difficult. We were now in the bosom of the Highlands, with full leisure to contemplate the appearance and properties of mountainous regions, such as have been, in many countries, the last shelters of national distress, and are everywhere the scenes of adventures, stratagems, surprises, and escapes.

62 Mountainous countries are not passed but with difficulty; not merely from the labor of climbing, for to climb is not always necessary: but because that which is not mountain is commonly bog, through which the way must be picked with caution. Where there are hills, there is much rain, and the torrents pouring down into the intermediate spaces, seldom find so ready an outlet as not to stagnate till they have broken the texture of the ground.

63 Of the hills, which our journey offered to the view on either side, we did not take the height, nor did we see any that astonished us with their loftiness. Toward the summit of one there was a white spot, which I should have called a naked rock; but the guides, who had better



eyes and were acquainted with the phenomena of the country, declared it to be snow. It had already lasted to the end of August, and was likely to maintain its contest with the sun till it should be reinforced by winter.

64 We passed many rivers and rivulets, which commonly ran with a clear shallow stream over a hard pebbly bottom. These channels, which seem so much wider than the water that they convey would naturally require, are formed by the violence of wintry floods, produced by the accumulation of innumerable streams that fall in rainy weather from the hills, and bursting away with resistless impetuosity, make themselves a passage proportionate to their mass.

65 Of the hills many may be called, with Homer's Ida, "abundant in springs," but few can deserve the epithet which he bestows upon Pelion, by "waving their leaves." They exhibit very little variety; being almost wholly covered with dark heath, and even that seems to be checked in its growth. What is not heath is nakedness, a little diversified by now and then a stream rushing down the steep. An eye accustomed to flowery pastures and waving harvests is astonished and repelled by this wide extent of hopeless sterility.

66 It will very readily occur,<sup>o</sup> that this uniformity of barrenness can afford very little amusement to the traveler; that it is easy to sit at home and conceive rocks, and heath, and waterfalls: and that these journeys are useless labors, which neither impregnate the imagination nor enlarge the understanding. It is true, that of far the greater part of things we must content ourselves with such knowledge as description may exhibit, or analogy supply; but it is true likewise, that these ideas are al-



ways incomplete, and that, at least till we have compared them with realities, we do not know them to be just.

67 Regions mountainous and wild, thinly inhabited, and little cultivated, make a great part of the earth, and he that has never seen them must live unacquainted with much of the face of nature, and with one of the great scenes of human existence.

68 As the day advanced toward noon, we entered a narrow valley not very flowery, but sufficiently verdant. Our guides told us, that the horses could not travel all day without rest or meat, and entreated us to stop here, because no grass would be found in any other place. The request was reasonable, and the argument cogent.<sup>o</sup> We therefore willingly dismounted, and diverted<sup>o</sup> ourselves as the place gave us opportunity.

69 I sat down on a bank, such as a writer of romance might have delighted to feign. I had indeed no trees to whisper over my head, but a clear rivulet streamed at my feet. The day was calm, the air was soft, and all was rudeness, silence, and solitude. Before me, and on either side, were high hills, which by hindering the eye from ranging, forced the mind to find entertainment<sup>22</sup> for itself. Whether I spent the hour well I know not; for here I first conceived the thought of this narration.

70 We were in this place at ease and by choice, and had no evils to suffer or to fear; yet the imaginations excited by the view of an unknown and untraveled wilderness are not such as arise in the artificial solitude of parks and

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<sup>22</sup> " Arrived there, the little house they fill,  
Ne looke for entertainment, where none was:  
Rest is their feast, and all things at their will:  
The noblest mind the best contentment has."

— *The Faerie Queene*, Book I, Canto I, line 35.

gardens, a flattering notion of self-sufficiency, a placid indulgence of voluntary delusions, a secure expansion of the fancy, or a cool concentration of the mental powers. The phantoms which haunt a desert are want and misery and danger; the evils of dereliction<sup>o</sup> rush upon the thoughts; man is made unwillingly acquainted with his own weakness, and meditation shows him only how little he can sustain, and how little he can perform. There were no traces of inhabitants, except, perhaps, a rude pile of clods, called a summer hut, in which a herdsman had rested in the favorable seasons.

GLENSHEALS.

71 We were now at a place where we could obtain milk, but must have wanted bread if we had not brought it. The people of this valley did not appear to know any English, and our guides now became doubly necessary as interpreters. A woman, whose hut was distinguished by greater spaciousness and better architecture, brought out some pails of milk. The villagers gather about us in considerable numbers, I believe without any evil intention, but with a very savage wildness of aspect and manner. When our meal was over, Mr. Boswell sliced the bread, and divided it amongst them, as he supposed them never to have tasted a wheaten loaf before. He then gave them little pieces of twisted tobacco, and among the children we distributed a small handful of halfpence, which they received with great eagerness. Yet I have been since told, that the people of that valley are not indigent; and when we mentioned them afterward as needy and pitiable, a Highland lady let us know, that we might spare our commiseration<sup>o</sup>; for the dame whose

milk we drank had probably more than a dozen milk cows. She seemed unwilling to take any price, but being pressed to make a demand, at last named a shilling. Honesty is not greater where elegance is less. One of the by-standers, as we were told afterward, advised her to ask more, but she said a shilling was enough. We gave her half-a-crown, and I hope got some credit by our behavior; for the company said, if our interpreters did not flatter us, that they had not seen such a day since the old laird of Macleod passed through their country.

## GLENELG.

72 We left Auknasheals and the Macraes in the afternoon, and in the evening came to Ratikin, a high hill on which a road is cut, but so steep and narrow that it is very difficult. There is now a design of making another way round the bottom. Upon one of the precipices my horse, weary with the steepness of the rise, staggered a little, and I called in haste to the Highlander to hold him. This was the only moment of my journey in which I thought myself endangered.

73 Having surmounted the hill at last, we were told that at Glenelg, on the sea-side, we should come to a house of lime, and slate, and glass. This image of magnificence raised our expectation. At last we came to our inn, weary and peevish, and began to inquire for meat and beds.

74 Of the provisions the negative catalogue was very copious. Here was no meat, no milk, no bread, no eggs, no wine. We did not express much satisfaction. Here, however, we were to stay. Whisky we might have, and I believe at last they caught a fowl and killed it; we

had some bread, and with that we prepared ourselves to be contented, when we had a very eminent proof of Highland hospitality. Along some miles of the way in the evening, a gentleman's servant had kept us company on foot with very little notice on our part. He left us near Glenelg, and we thought on him no more till he came to us again in about two hours, with a present from his master of rum and sugar.

75 We were now to examine our lodging. Out <sup>23</sup> of one of the beds on which we were to repose, started up at our entrance a man black as a Cyclops from the forge. Other circumstances of no elegant recital concurred to disgust us. We had been frightened by a lady at Edinburgh with discouraging representations of Highland lodgings. Sleep, however, was necessary. Our Highlanders had at last found some hay, with which the inn could not supply them; I directed them to bring a bundle into the room, and slept upon it in my riding coat. Mr. Boswell being more delicate, laid himself sheets, with hay over and under him, and lay in linen like a gentleman.

SKYE.—ARMIDEL.

76 In the morning, September the twentieth, we found ourselves on the edge of the sea. Having procured a boat, we dismissed our Highlanders, whom I would recommend to the service of any future travelers, and

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<sup>23</sup> In his essay on Croker's Boswell's Johnson, Macaulay says that the original form of this "Tour" was a series of letters to Mrs. Thrale. The learned world has had sport over what it was pleased to call "Johnsonese." Macaulay quotes this passage from the Letters: "A dirty fellow bounced out of the bed in which one of us was to lie." From this Johnson translated it into the form it has in the text.

were ferried over to the isle of Skye. We landed at Armidel, where we were met on the sands by Sir Alexander Macdonald, who was at that time there with his lady, preparing to leave the island and reside at Edinburgh.

77 As we sat at Sir Alexander's table, we were entertained, according to the ancient usage of the north, with the melody of the bagpipe. Everything in those countries has its history. As the bagpiper was playing, an elderly gentleman informed us that in some remote time the Macdonalds of Glengary having been injured or offended by the inhabitants of Culloden, and resolving to have justice or vengeance, came to Culloden on a Sunday, where, finding their enemies at worship, they shut them up in the church, which they set on fire; and this, said he, is the tune that the piper played while they were burning.

78 He that travels in the Highlands may easily saturate<sup>o</sup> his soul with intelligence, if he will acquiesce<sup>o</sup> in the first account. The Highlander gives to every question an answer so prompt and peremptory,<sup>o</sup> that scepticism itself is dared into silence, and the mind sinks before the bold reporter in unresisting credulity<sup>o</sup>; but if a second question be ventured, it breaks the enchantment; for it is immediately discovered, that what was told so confidently was told at hazard, and that such fearlessness of assertion was either the sport of negligence, or the refuge of ignorance.

79 In our passage from Scotland to Skye, we were-wet for the first time with a shower. This was the beginning of the Highland winter, after which we were told that a succession of three dry days was not to be expected for

many months. The winter of the Hebrides consists of little more than rain and wind. As they are surrounded by an ocean never frozen, the blasts that come to them over the water are too much softened to have the power of congelation.° The salt lochs, or inlets of the sea, which shoot very far into the island, never have any ice upon them, and the pools of fresh water will never bear the walker. The snow that sometimes falls is soon dissolved by the air or the rain.

CORIATACHAN IN SKYE.

80 The third or fourth day after our arrival at Armidel brought us an invitation to the isle of Raasay, which lies east of Skye. It is incredible how soon the account of any event is propagated° in these narrow countries by the love of talk which much leisure produces, and the relief given to the mind in the penury° of insular conversation by a new topic. I know not whether we touched at any corner, where fame had not already prepared us a reception.

81 To gain a commodious passage to Raasay, it was necessary to pass over a large part of Skye. We were furnished therefore with horses and a guide. In the islands there are no roads, nor any marks by which a stranger may find his way.

But there seems to be in all this more alarm than danger. The Highlander walks carefully before, and the horse, accustomed to the ground, follows him with little deviation.° Sometimes the hill is too steep for the horseman to keep his seat, and sometimes the moss is too tremulous° to bear the double weight of horse and man. The rider then dismounts, and all shift as they can.



82 The weather was next day too violent for the continuation of our journey; but we had no reason to complain of the interruption. We saw in every place what we chiefly desired to know — the manners of the people. We had company, and if we had chosen retirement, we might have had books.

I never was in any house of the islands where I did not find books in more languages than one, if I had stayed long enough to want them, except one from which the family was removed. Literature is not neglected by the higher rank of the Hebridians.

83 It need not, I suppose, be mentioned, that in countries so little frequented<sup>d</sup> as the islands, there are no houses where travelers are entertained for money. He that wanders about these wilds, either procures recommendations to those whose habitations lie near his way, or, when night and weariness come upon him, takes the chance of general hospitality. If he finds only a cottage, he can expect little more than shelter, for the cottagers have little more for themselves; but if his good fortune brings him to the residence of a gentleman, he will be glad of a storm to prolong his stay.

84 At the tables where a stranger is received neither plenty nor delicacy is wanting. A tract of land so thinly inhabited must have much wild-fowl; and I scarcely remember to have seen a dinner without them. The moor-game is everywhere to be had. That the sea abounds with fish needs not be told, for it supplies a great part of Europe.

85 A man of the Hebrides, for of the women's diet I can give no account, as soon as he appears in the morning, swallows a glass of whisky; yet they are not a drunken

race, at least I never was present at much intemperance; but no man is so abstemious<sup>o</sup> as to refuse the morning dram, which they call a *skalk*. The word whisky signifies water, and is applied by way of eminence<sup>o</sup> to strong water, or distilled liquor. The spirit drank in the north is drawn from barley. I never tasted it, except once for experiment at the inn in Inveraray, when I thought it preferable to any English malt brandy.

86 Not long after the dram may be expected the breakfast, a meal in which the Scots, whether of the lowlands or mountains, must be confessed to excel us. The tea and coffee are accompanied not only with butter, but with honey, conserves, and marmalades. If an epicure<sup>o</sup> could remove by a wish, in quest of sensual gratifications,<sup>24</sup> wherever he had supped, he would breakfast in Scotland.

In the islands, however, they do what I found it not very easy to endure. They pollute the tea-table by plates piled with large slices of Cheshire cheese, which mingles its less grateful odors with the fragrance of the tea.

87 Where many questions are to be asked, some will be omitted. I forgot to inquire how they were supplied with so much exotic<sup>o</sup> luxury. Perhaps the French may bring them wine for wool, and the Dutch give them tea and coffee at the fishing season, in exchange for fresh provision. Their trade is unconstrained; they pay no customs, for there is no officer to demand them; whatever, therefore, is made dear only by impost,<sup>o</sup> is obtained here at an easy rate.

88 A dinner in the Western Islands differs very little from a dinner in England, except that in the place of

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<sup>24</sup> travel by a wish in search of delicacies.

tarts there are always set different preparations of milk. This part of their diet will admit some improvement. Though they have milk, and eggs, and sugar, few of them know how to compound them in a custard. Their gardens afford them no great variety, but they have always some vegetables on the table. Potatoes at least are never wanting, which, though they have not known them long, are now one of the principal parts of their food. They are not of the mealy, but of the viscous<sup>o</sup> kind.

89 The knives are not often either very bright or very sharp. They are indeed instruments of which the Highlanders have not been long acquainted with the general use. They were not regularly laid on the table, before the prohibition of arms, and the change of dress. Thirty years ago the Highlander wore his knife as a companion to his dirk or dagger, and when the company sat down to meat, the men who had knives cut the flesh into small pieces for the women, who with their fingers conveyed it to their mouths.

90 There was, perhaps, never any change of national manners so quick, so great, and so general, as that which has operated in the Highlands, by the last conquest,<sup>25</sup> and the subsequent laws. We came thither too late to see what we expected, a people of peculiar appearance, and a system of antiquated<sup>o</sup> life. Of what they had before the late conquest of their country, there remain only their language and their poverty. Their language is attacked on every side. Schools are erected, in which English only is taught, and there were lately some who thought it reasonable to refuse them a version of the holy Scrip-

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<sup>25</sup> In 1746, by the Duke of Cumberland.

tures, that they might have no monument<sup>26</sup> of their mother-tongue.

That their poverty is gradually abated<sup>o</sup> cannot be mentioned among the unpleasing consequences of subjection. They are now acquainted with money, and the possibility of gain will by degrees make them industrious. Such is the effect of the late regulations, that a longer journey than to the Highlands must be taken by him whose curiosity pants for savage virtues and barbarous grandeur.

RAASAY.

91 At the first intermission of the stormy weather we were informed that the boat, which was to convey us to Raasay, attended<sup>27</sup> us on the coast. We had from this time our intelligence facilitated<sup>28</sup> and our conversation enlarged by the company of Mr. Macqueen, minister of a parish in Skye, whose knowledge and politeness give him a title equally to kindness and respect, and who from this time never forsook us till we were preparing to leave Skye and the adjacent places.

92 The boat was under the direction of Mr. Malcolm Macleod, a gentleman of Raasay. The water was calm and the rowers were vigorous, so that our passage was quick and pleasant. When we came near the island we saw the laird's house, a neat modern fabric, and found Mr. Macleod, the proprietor of the island, with many gentlemen, expecting us on the beach. We had, as at all other places, some difficulty in landing. The crags were

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<sup>26</sup> something to remind them of.

<sup>27</sup> waited for.

<sup>28</sup> process made easy.

irregularly broken, and a false step would have been very mischievous.<sup>29</sup>

93 Our reception exceeded our expectations. We found nothing but civility, elegance, and plenty. After the usual refreshments and the usual conversation, the evening came upon us. The carpet was then rolled off the floor; the musician was called, and the whole company was invited to dance, nor did ever fairies trip with greater alacrity. The general air of festivity which predominated<sup>o</sup> in this place, so far remote from all those regions which the mind has been used to contemplate as the mansions of pleasure, struck the imagination with a delightful surprise, analogous to that which is felt at an unexpected emersion<sup>o</sup> from darkness into light.

94 When it was time to sup, the dance ceased, and six-and-thirty persons sat down to two tables in the same room. After supper the ladies sung Erse<sup>30</sup> songs, to which I listened as an English audience to an Italian opera, delighted with the sound of words which I did not understand.

I inquired the subjects of the songs, and was told of one that it was a love song, and of another that it was a farewell composed by one of the islanders that was going, in this epidemical<sup>o</sup> fury of emigration, to seek his fortune in America. What sentiments would rise on such an occasion in the heart of one who had not been taught to lament by precedent I should gladly have known; but the lady by whom I sat thought herself not equal to the work of translating.

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<sup>29</sup> injurious.

<sup>30</sup> Gaelic.

95 Mr. Macleod is the proprietor of the islands of Raasay, Rona, and Fladda, and possesses an extensive district in Skye. The estate has not during four hundred years gained or lost a single acre.

96 It is not very easy to fix the principles upon which mankind have agreed to eat some animals and reject others. An Englishman is not easily persuaded to dine on snails with an Italian, on frogs with a Frenchman, or on horse-flesh with a Tartar. The vulgar <sup>31</sup> inhabitants of Skye, I know not whether of the other islands, have not only eels, but pork and bacon in abhorrence.°

97 In Raasay they might have hares and rabbits, for they have no foxes. Some depredations, such as were never made before, have caused a suspicion that a fox has been lately landed in the island by spite or wantonness. How beasts of prey came into any islands is not easy to guess. In cold countries they take advantage of hard winters, and travel over the ice; but this is a very scanty <sup>32</sup> solution, for they are found where they have no discoverable means of coming.

98 The corn <sup>33</sup> of this island is but little. I saw the harvest of a small field. The women reaped the corn and the men bound up the sheaves. The strokes of the sickle were timed by the modulation° of the harvest-song, in which all their voices were united. They accompany in the Highlands every action which can be done in equal time with an appropriate strain, which has, they say, not much meaning; but its effects are regularity and cheerfulness. The ancient song by which the rowers

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<sup>31</sup> common people.

<sup>32</sup> poor, unsatisfactory.

<sup>33</sup> grain.



of galleys were animated may be supposed to have been of this kind. There is now an oar-song used by the Hebridians.

**99** The ground of Raasay seems fitter for cattle than for corn; and of black cattle, I suppose, the number is very great. The laird himself keeps a herd of four hundred, one hundred of which are annually sold. Of an extensive domain, which he holds in his own hands, he considers the sale of the cattle as repaying him the rent, and supports the plenty of a very liberal table with the remaining product.

**100** Raasay is supposed to have been very long inhabited. On one side of it they show caves into which the rude nations of the first ages retreated from the weather. These dreary vaults might have had other uses. There is still a cavity near the house called the oar-cave, in which the seamen, after one of those piratical expeditions, which in rougher times were very frequent, used, as tradition tells, to hide their oars. This hollow was near the sea, that nothing so necessary might be far to be fetched; and it was secret, that enemies, if they landed, could find nothing. Yet it is not very evident of what use it was to hide their oars from those, who if they were masters of the coast, could take away their boats.

**101** A proof much stronger of the distance at which the first possessors of this island lived from the present time, is afforded by the stone heads of arrows, which are very frequently picked up. The people call them elf-bolts, and believe that the fairies shoot them at the cattle.

**102** The number of this little community has never been counted by its ruler, nor have I obtained any positive account, consistent with the result of political computa-

tion. Not many years ago the late laird led out one hundred men upon a military expedition. The sixth part of a people is supposed capable of bearing arms: Raasay had therefore six hundred inhabitants. But because it is not likely that every man able to serve in the field would follow the summons, or that the chief would leave his lands totally defenseless, or take away all the hands qualified for labor, let it be supposed that half as many might be permitted to stay at home.

**103** Near the house at Raasay is a chapel, unroofed and ruinous, which has long been used only as a place of burial. About the churches in the islands are small squares inclosed with stone, which belong to particular families, as repositories for the dead. At Raasay there is one, I think, for the proprietor, and one for some collateral house.

**104** It has been, for many years, popular to talk of the lazy devotion of the Romish clergy; over the sleepy laziness of men that erected churches we may indulge our superiority with a new triumph, by comparing it with the fervid activity of those who suffer them to fall.

Of the destruction of churches, the decay of religion must in time be the consequence; for while the public acts of the ministry are now performed in houses, a very small number can be present; and as the greater part of the islanders make no use of books, all must necessarily live in total ignorance who want the opportunity of vocal instruction.

**105** From these remains of ancient sanctity, which are everywhere to be found, it has been conjectured that for the last two centuries the inhabitants of the islands have decreased in number. This argument, which sup-

poses that the churches have been suffered to fall only because they were no longer necessary would have some force if the houses of worship still remaining were sufficient for the people. But since they have now no churches at all, these venerable fragments do not prove the people of former times to have been more numerous but to have been more devout.

106 Raasay has little that can detain a traveler, except the laird and his family; but their power wants no auxiliaries. Such a seat of hospitality, amidst the winds and waters, fills the imagination with a delightful contrariety of images. Without is the rough ocean and the rocky land, the beating billows and the howling storm; within is plenty and elegance, beauty and gaiety, the song and the dance. In Raasay, if I could have found an Ulysses, I had fancied a Phæacia.<sup>34</sup>

## DUNVEGAN.

107 At Raasay, by good fortune, Macleod, so the chief of the clan is called, was paying a visit, and by him we were invited to his seat at Dunvegan. Raasay has a stout boat, built in Norway, in which, with six oars, he conveyed us back to Skye. We landed at Port Re, so called because James <sup>35</sup> the Fifth of Scotland, who had curiosity to visit the islands, came into it. The port is made by an inlet of the sea, deep and narrow, where a ship lay waiting to dispeople Skye, by carrying the natives away to America.

<sup>34</sup> The last tarrying place of Ulysses, the hero of Homer's *Odyssey*, the king of Ithaca, the husband of Penelope. The Phæacians pitied Ulysses, and conveyed him home to Ithaca.

<sup>35</sup> Father of the brilliant but unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots. "Port Re"—the King's Gate.

108 Here we dined at a public-house, I believe the only inn of the island, and having mounted our horses, traveled in the manner already described, till we came to Kingsborough, a place distinguished by that name, because the king lodged here when he landed at Port Re. We were entertained with the usual hospitality by Mr. Macdonald and his lady Flora Macdonald,<sup>36</sup> a name that will be mentioned in history, and if courage and fidelity be virtues, mentioned with honor. She is a woman of middle stature, soft features, gentle manners, and elegant presence.<sup>o</sup>

109 In the morning we sent our horses round a promontory to meet us, and spared ourselves part of the day's fatigue, by crossing an arm of the sea. We had at last some difficulty in coming to Dunvegan; for our way led over an extensive moor, where every step was to be taken with caution, and we were often obliged to alight, because the ground could not be trusted.

110 To Dunvegan we came, very willing to be at rest, and found our fatigue amply recompensed by our reception. Lady Macleod, who had lived many years in England, was newly come hither with her son and four daughters, who knew all the arts of southern elegance, and all the modes of English economy. Here therefore we settled, and did not spoil the present hour with thoughts of departure.

111 Here the violence of the weather confined us for some time, not at all to our discontent or inconvenience. We would indeed very willingly have visited the islands,

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<sup>36</sup> The escape of "Prince Charlie" after his defeat, 1746, by the Duke of Cumberland, at the battle of Culloden, is said to be largely due to the bravery of Flora Macdonald.

which might be seen from the house scattered in the sea, and I was particularly desirous to have viewed Isay; but the storms did not permit us to launch a boat, and we were condemned to listen in idleness to the wind, except when we were better engaged by listening to the ladies.

**112** We had here more wind than waves, and suffered the severity of a tempest, without enjoying its magnificence. The sea being broken by the multitude of islands, does not roar with so much noise, nor beat the storm with such foamy violence as I have remarked on the coast of Sussex. Though, while I was in the Hebrides, the wind was extremely turbulent,<sup>o</sup> I never saw very high billows.

The country about Dunvegan is rough and barren. There are no trees, except in the orchard, which is a low sheltered spot, surrounded with a wall.

**113** It is usual to call gentlemen in Scotland by the name of their possessions, as Raasay, Bernera, Loch Buy, a practice necessary in countries inhabited by clans, where all that live in the same territory have one name, and must be therefore discriminated by some addition.

**114** The little island of Muck, south of Skye, is of considerable value. It is two English miles long, and three quarters of a mile broad, and consequently contains only nine hundred and sixty English acres. It is chiefly arable. Half of this little dominion the laird retains in his own hand, and on the other half, live one hundred and sixty persons, who pay their rent by exported corn. What rent they pay we were not told, and could not decently <sup>37</sup> inquire. The proportion of the people to the

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<sup>37</sup> properly.

land is such as the most fertile countries do not commonly maintain.

115 At Dunvegan I had tasted lotus,<sup>38</sup> and was in danger of forgetting that I was ever to depart, till Mr. Boswell sagely reproached me with my sluggishness and softness. I had no very forcible defense to make; and we agreed to pursue our journey. Macleod accompanied us to Ulinish, where we were entertained by the sheriff of the island.

#### ULINISH.

116 Mr. Macqueen traveled with us, and directed our attention to all that was worthy of observation. With him we went to see an ancient building, called a *dun* or borough.

If it was ever roofed, it might once have been a dwelling, but as there is no provision for water, it could not have been a fortress. In Skye, as in every other place, there is an ambition of exalting<sup>o</sup> whatever has survived memory, to some important use, and referring it to very remote ages. I am inclined to suspect, that in lawless times, when the inhabitants of every mountain stole the cattle of their neighbor, these inclosures were used to secure the herds and the flocks in the night.

117 We were then told of a cavern by the sea-side, remarkable for the powerful reverberation of sounds. After dinner we took a boat to explore this curious cavity. The boatmen, who seemed to be of a rank above that of the common drudges, inquired who the strangers

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<sup>38</sup> According to an old fable, the traveler who ate the leaf of the lotus forgot his home, or, at least, didn't care to return. "The Chamber of Peers in England is the dormitory of freedom and of genius. Those who enter it have eaten the lotus, and forget their country."—*Landor*.



were, and being told we came, one from Scotland, and the other from England, asked if the Englishman could recount a long genealogy. What answer was given them, the conversation being in Erse, I was not much inclined to examine.

They expected no good event<sup>o</sup> of the voyage; for one of them declared that he heard the cry of an English ghost. This omen I was not told till after our return, and therefore cannot claim the dignity of despising it. 118 The sea was smooth. We never left the shore, and came without any disaster to the cavern, which we found rugged and misshapen, about one hundred and eighty feet long, thirty wide in the broadest part, and in the loftiest, as we guessed, about thirty high. It was now dry, but at high water the sea rises in it near six feet. Here I saw what I had never seen before, limpets and mussels in their natural state. But, as a new testimony to the veracity of common fame, here was no echo to be heard.

119 We then walked through a natural arch in the rock, which might have pleased us by its novelty, had the stones, which encumbered<sup>o</sup> our feet, given us leisure to consider it. We were shown the gummy seed of the kelp, that fastens itself to a stone, from which it grows into a strong stalk.

In our return we found a little boy upon the point of a rock, catching with an angle a supper for the family. We rowed up to him, and borrowed his rod, with which Mr. Boswell caught a cuddy.

#### TALISKER IN SKYE.

120 From Ulinish our next stage was to Talisker, the house of Colonel Macleod, an officer in the Dutch service,

who in this time of universal peace, has for several years been permitted to be absent from his regiment. Having been bred to physic, he is consequently a scholar, and his lady, by accompanying him in his different places of residence, is become skillful in several languages. Talisker is the place beyond all that I have seen, from which the gay and the jovial seem utterly excluded; and where the hermit might expect to grow old in meditation, without possibility of disturbance or interruption. It is situated very near the sea, but upon a coast where no vessel lands but when it is driven by a tempest on the rocks. Toward the land are lofty hills streaming with waterfalls. The garden is sheltered by firs or pines, which grow there so prosperous, that some, which the present inhabitant planted, are very high and thick.

121 At this place we very happily met with Mr. Donald Maclean, a young gentleman, the eldest son of the laird of Col, heir to a very great extent of land, and so desirous of improving his inheritance that he spent a considerable time among the farmers of Hertfordshire and Hampshire, to learn their practice. He worked with his own hands at the principal operations of agriculture, that he might not deceive himself by a false opinion of skill, which if he should find it deficient at home, he had no means of completing. If the world has agreed to praise the travel and manual labors of the czar<sup>39</sup> of Muscovy, let Col have his share of the like applause, in the proportion of his dominions to the empire of Russia.

This young gentleman was sporting in the mountains of Skye, and when he was weary with following his

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<sup>39</sup> Peter the Great, who went to Holland and learned ship-building.

game, repaired for lodging to Talisker. At night he missed one of his dogs, and when he went to seek him in the morning, found two eagles feeding on his carcass. **122** Col, for he must be named by his possessions, hearing that our intention was to visit Iona, offered to conduct us to his chief, Sir Allan Maclean, who lived in the isle of Inch Kenneth, and would readily find us a convenient passage. From this time was formed an acquaintance which, being begun by kindness, was accidentally continued by constraint; we derived much pleasure from it, and I hope have given him no reason to repent it.

The weather was now almost one continued storm, and we were to snatch some happy intermission to be conveyed to Mull, the third island of the Hebrides, lying about a degree south of Skye, whence we might easily find our way to Inch Kenneth, where Sir Allan Maclean resided, and afterward to Iona.

#### OSTIG IN SKYE.

**123** At Ostig, of which Mr. Macpherson is minister, we were entertained for some days, then removed to Armidel, where we finished our observations on the island of Skye.

As this island lies in the fifty-seventh degree, the air cannot be supposed to have much warmth. The long continuance of the sun above the horizon does indeed sometimes produce great heat in northern latitudes; but this can only happen in sheltered places, where the atmosphere is to a certain extent stagnant, and the same mass of air continues to receive for many hours the rays of the sun and the vapors of the earth. Skye lies open on the west and north to a vast extent of ocean, and is cooled in the summer by a perpetual ventilation, but by

the same blasts is kept warm in winter. Their weather is not pleasing. Half the year is deluged with rain. From the autumnal to the vernal equinox, a dry day is hardly known, except when the showers are suspended by a tempest.<sup>o</sup> Under such skies can be expected no great exuberance<sup>o</sup> of vegetation. Their winter overtakes their summer, and their harvest lies upon the ground drenched with rain. The autumn struggles hard to produce some of our early fruits. I gathered gooseberries in September; but they were small, and the husk was thick.

124 The winter is seldom such as puts a full stop to the growth of plants, or reduces the cattle to live wholly on the surplusage<sup>o</sup> of the summer. In the year seventy-one they had a severe season, remembered by the name of the Black Spring, from which the island has not yet recovered. The snow lay long upon the ground, a calamity hardly known before. There are many bogs or mosses of greater or less extent, where the soil cannot be supposed to want depth, though it is too wet for the plow. But we did not observe in these any aquatic plants. The valleys and the mountains are alike darkened with heath. Some grass, however, grows here and there, and some happier spots of earth are capable of tillage.

125 Their agriculture is laborious, and perhaps rather feeble than unskillful. Their chief manure is seaweed which, when they lay it to rot upon the field, gives them a better crop than those of the Highlands. They heap seashells upon the dunghill, which in time molder into a fertilizing substance. When they find a vein of earth where they cannot use it, they dig it up, and add it to the mold of a more commodious<sup>o</sup> place.

126 The barns of Skye I never saw. That which Mac-

leod of Raasay had erected near his house was so contrived, because the harvest is seldom brought home dry, as by perpetual perflation<sup>40</sup> to prevent the mow from heating.

Of their gardens I can judge only from their tables. I did not observe that the common greens were wanting, and suppose, that by choosing an advantageous exposition, they can raise all the more hardy esculent<sup>41</sup> plants. Of vegetable fragrance or beauty they are not yet studious.<sup>42</sup> Few vows are made to Flora<sup>43</sup> in the Hebrides.

They gather a little hay; but the grass is mown late, and is so often almost dry and again very wet, before it is housed, that it becomes a collection of withered stalks without taste or fragrance.

**127** The cattle of Skye are not so small as is commonly believed. Since they have sent their beeves in great numbers to southern marts, they have probably taken more care of their breed. At stated times the annual growth<sup>o</sup> of cattle is driven to a fair by a general drover, and with the money, which he returns to the farmer, the rents are paid.

Of their black cattle some are without horns, called by the Scots humble cows, as we call a bee a humble bee that wants a sting.

**128** Their horses are, like their cows, of a moderate size. I had no difficulty to mount myself commodiously by the favor of the gentlemen.

<sup>40</sup> ventilation.

<sup>41</sup> eatable.

<sup>42</sup> concerned.

<sup>43</sup> "When Flora with her fragrant flowers  
Bedekt the earth so trim and gay."

— *From the ballad, "Sir Andrew Barton."*

The goat is the general inhabitant of the earth, complying with every difference of climate and of soil.

In the penury<sup>o</sup> of these malignant<sup>o</sup> regions, nothing is left that can be converted to food. The goats and the sheep are milked like the cows. A single meal<sup>o</sup> <sup>44</sup> of a goat is a quart, and of a sheep a pint. Such at least was the account, which I could extract from those of whom I am not sure that they ever had inquired.

The milk of goats is much thinner than that of cows, and that of sheep is much thicker. Sheep's milk is never eaten before it is boiled; as it is thick, it must be very liberal of curd, and the people of St. Kilda form it into small cheeses.

**129** Man is by the use of firearms made so much an overmatch for other animals that in all countries, where they are in use, the wild part of the creation sensibly diminishes. There will probably not be long either stags or roebucks in the islands. All the beasts of chase would have been lost long ago in countries well inhabited had they not been preserved by laws for the pleasure of the rich.

**130** There are in Skye neither rats nor mice, but the weasel is so frequent that he is heard in houses rattling behind chests or beds, as rats in England. They probably owe to his predominance that they have no other vermin, for since the great rat took possession of this part of the world, scarce a ship can touch at any port but some of his race are left behind. They have within these few years begun to infest the isle of Col, where, being left by some trading vessel, they have increased for want of weasels to oppose them.

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<sup>44</sup> Amount given at a "milking."



**131** The inhabitants of Skye, and of the other islands which I have seen, are commonly of the middle stature, with fewer among them very tall or very short than are seen in England.

The ladies have as much beauty here as in other places, but bloom and softness are not to be expected among the lower classes, whose faces are exposed to the rudeness of the climate, and whose features are sometimes contracted by want, and sometimes hardened by the blasts. Supreme beauty is seldom found in cottages or workshops, even where no real hardships are suffered. To expand the human face to its full perfection, it seems necessary that the mind should co-operate by placidness of content, or consciousness of superiority.

**132** Their strength is proportionate to their size, but they are accustomed to run upon rough ground, and therefore can with great agility skip over the bog or clamber the mountain. For a campaign <sup>45</sup> in the wastes of America, soldiers better qualified could not have been found. Having little work to do, they are not willing nor perhaps able to endure a long continuance of manual labor, and are therefore considered as habitually idle.

**133** It is generally supposed that life is longer in places where there are few opportunities of luxury; but I found no instance here of extraordinary longevity.<sup>o</sup> A cottager grows old over his oaten cakes, like a citizen at a turtle feast. He is indeed seldom incommoded by corpulence. Poverty preserves him from sinking under the burden of himself, but he escapes no other injury of time. Instances of long life are often related, which those who hear them are more willing to credit than examine. To be told

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<sup>45</sup> What war had Johnson in mind?

that any man has attained a hundred years gives hope and comfort to him who stands trembling on the brink of his own climacteric.<sup>46</sup>

**134** Length of life is distributed impartially to very different modes of life in very different climates; and the mountains have no greater examples of age and health than the lowlands, where I was introduced to two ladies of high quality; one of whom, in her ninety-fourth year, presided at her table with the full exercise of all her powers; and the other has attained her eighty-fourth, without any diminution of her vivacity,<sup>o</sup> and with little reason to accuse time of depredations on her beauty.

**135** In the islands, as in most other places, the inhabitants are of different rank, and one does not encroach here upon another. Since money has been brought amongst them, they have found, like others, the art of spending more than they receive; and I saw with grief the chief of a very ancient clan, whose island was condemned by law to be sold for the satisfaction of his creditors.

**136** The name of highest in dignity is laird, of which there are in the extensive isle of Skye only three, Macdonald, Macleod, and Mackinnon. The laird is the original owner of the land, whose natural power must be very great where no man lives but by agriculture. The laird has all those in his power that live upon his farms. Kings can, for the most part, only exalt or degrade. The laird at pleasure can feed or starve, can give bread or withhold it. This inherent power was yet strengthened by the kindness of consanguinity,<sup>o</sup> and the reverence of

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<sup>46</sup> His sixty-fourth year.

patriarchal authority. The laird was the father of the clan, and his tenants commonly bore his name.

137 This multifarious and extensive obligation operated with force scarcely credible. Every duty, moral or political, was absorbed in affection and adherence to the chief. Not many years have passed since the clans knew no law but the laird's will. He told them to whom they should be friends or enemies, what king they should obey, and what religion they should profess.

138 As the mind must govern the hands, so in every society the man of intelligence must direct the man of labor.<sup>47</sup> The laird, in these wide estates, which often consist of islands remote from one another, cannot extend his personal influence to all his tenants; and the steward, having no dignity annexed to his character, can have little authority among men taught to pay reverence only to birth, and who regard the tacksman<sup>48</sup> as their hereditary superior.

139 The only gentlemen in the islands are the lairds, the tacksmen, and the ministers, who frequently improve their livings by becoming farmers. If the tacksmen be banished, who will be left to impart knowledge or impress civility? The laird must always be at a distance from the greater part of his lands; and if he resides at all upon them, must drag his days in solitude, having no

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<sup>47</sup> It is related that Dr. Johnson added a few lines to Goldsmith's *The Traveller*. Either may have written this couplet:—

“For just experience tells, in every soil,  
That those who think must govern those that toil.”

<sup>48</sup> A large taker or leaseholder of land, of which he keeps part and lets part to undertenants. These “tacks,” or subordinate possessions, were long considered hereditary. The tacksman held a middle station between the higher and lower order.

longer either a friend or a companion; he will therefore depart to some more comfortable residence, and leave the tenants to the wisdom and mercy of a factor.

140 The condition of domestic servants or the price of occasional labor I do not know with certainty. I was told that the maids have sheep, and are allowed to spin for their own clothing; perhaps they have no pecuniary wages, or none but in very wealthy families.

141 Such is the system of insular subordination, which having little variety cannot afford much delight in the view, nor long detain the mind in contemplation. The inhabitants were for a long time, perhaps, not unhappy; but their content was a muddy mixture of pride and ignorance, an indifference for pleasures which they did not know, a blind veneration for their chiefs, and a strong conviction of their own importance.

142 That dignity which they derived from an opinion of their military importance, the law which disarmed them has abated. An old gentleman, delighting himself with the recollection of better days, related that forty years ago a chieftain walked out attended by ten or twelve followers with their arms rattling. That animating rabble has now ceased. The chief has lost his formidable retinue, and the Highlander walks his heath unarmed and defenseless, with the peaceable submission of a French peasant or English cottager.

143 Their ignorance grows every day less, but their knowledge is yet of little other use than to show them their wants. They are now in the period of education, and feel the uneasiness of discipline without yet perceiving the benefit of instruction.

144 The last law, by which the Highlanders are deprived

of their arms, has operated with efficacy<sup>o</sup> beyond expectation. Of former statutes made with the same design, the execution has been feeble and the effect inconsiderable. Concealment was undoubtedly practiced, and perhaps often with connivance.<sup>o</sup> There was tenderness or partiality on one side, and obstinacy on the other. But the law which followed the victory of Culloden <sup>49</sup> found the whole nation dejected and intimidated; informations were given without danger and without fear, and the arms were collected with such rigor that every house was despoiled of its defense.

**145** To disarm part of the Highlands could give no reasonable occasion of complaint. Every government must be allowed the power of taking away the weapon that is lifted against it. But the loyal clans murmured with some appearance of justice, that, after having defended the king, they were forbidden for the future to defend themselves, and that the sword should be forfeited which had been legally employed.

**146** It affords a generous and manly pleasure to conceive a little nation gathering its fruits and tending its herds with fearless confidence, though it lies open on every side to invasion, where, in contempt of walls and trenches every man sleeps securely with his sword beside him; where all on the first approach of hostility came together at the call of battle as at a summons to a festal show; and committing their cattle to the care of those whom age or nature has disabled, engage the enemy with that

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<sup>49</sup> In 1746, the grandson of the deposed James II. made an attempt to gain the throne and send George II. back to Hanover. This last effort of the Stuarts was crushed at the battle of Culloden. The story is vividly told in Scott's *Waverley*.

competition for hazard and for glory which operate in men that fight under the eye of those whose dislike or kindness they have always considered as the greatest evil or the greatest good.

147 This was, in the beginning of the present century, the state of the Highlands. Every man was a soldier, who partook of national confidence and interested himself in national honor. To lose this spirit is to lose what no small advantage will compensate.

148 It may likewise deserve to be inquired whether a great nation ought to be totally commercial; whether, amidst the uncertainty of human affairs, too much attention to one mode of happiness may not endanger others.

149 It must, however, be confessed that a man who places honor only in successful violence is a very troublesome and pernicious<sup>o</sup> animal in time of peace, and that the martial character cannot prevail in a whole people but by the diminution of all other virtues.

150 The power of deciding controversies and of punishing offenses, as some such power there must always be, was intrusted to the lairds of the country, to those whom the people considered as their natural judges. It cannot be supposed that a rugged proprietor of the rocks, unprincipled and unenlightened, was a nice<sup>50</sup> resolver of entangled claims, or very exact in proportioning punishment to offenses. But the more he indulged his own will, the more he held his vassals in dependence. Prudence and innocence, without the favor of the chief, conferred no security; and crimes involved no danger when the judge was resolute to acquit.

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<sup>50</sup> careful, particular.



**151** In all greater questions, however, there is now happily an end to all fear or hope from malice or from favor. The roads are secure in those places through which, forty years ago, no traveler could pass without a convoy.<sup>51</sup> All trials of right by the swords are forgotten, and the mean<sup>o</sup> are in as little danger from the powerful as in other places. No scheme of policy has in any country yet brought the rich and poor on equal terms into courts of judicature. Perhaps experience improving on experience may in time effect it.

**152** Those who have long enjoyed dignity and power ought not to lose it without some equivalent. There was paid to the chiefs by the public, in exchange for their privileges, perhaps a sum greater than most of them had ever possessed, which excited a thirst for riches of which it showed them the use. When the power of birth and station ceases, no hope remains but from the prevalence of money. Power and wealth supply the place of each other. Power confers the ability of gratifying our desire without the consent of others. Wealth enables us to obtain the consent of others to our gratification. Power, simply considered, whatever it confers on one, must take from another. Wealth enables its owner to give to others by taking only from himself. Power pleases the violent and proud: wealth delights the placid<sup>o</sup> and the timorous. Youth, therefore, flies at power, and age grovels after riches.

**153** There seems now, whatever be the cause, to be through a great part of the Highlands a general discontent. That adherence which was lately professed by every man to the chief of his name has now little prevalence<sup>o</sup> ;

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<sup>51</sup> guard.

and he that cannot live as he desires at home listens to the tale of fortunate islands and happy regions, where every man may have land of his own, and eat the product of his labor without a superior.

**154** Those who have obtained grants of American lands have, as is well known, invited settlers from all quarters of the globe; and among other places, where oppression might produce a wish for new habitations, their emissaries would not fail to try their persuasions in the isles of Scotland, where at the time when the clans were newly disunited from their chiefs, and exasperated<sup>o</sup> by unprecedented<sup>o</sup> exactions, it is no wonder that they prevailed.

**155** Whether the mischiefs of emigration were immediately perceived may be justly questioned. They who went first were probably such as could best be spared; but the accounts sent by the earliest adventurers, whether true or false, inclined many to follow them, and whole neighborhoods formed parties for removal, so that departure from their native country is no longer exile. He that goes thus accompanied carries with him all that makes life pleasant. He sits down in a better climate, surrounded by his kindred and his friends: they carry with them their language, their opinions, their popular songs, and hereditary<sup>o</sup> merriment: they change nothing but the place of their abode, and of that change they perceive the benefit.

**156** This is the real effect of emigration if those that go away together settle on the same spot and preserve their ancient union. But some relate that these adventurous visitants of unknown regions, after a voyage passed in dreams of plenty and felicity, are dispersed at last upon a sylvan wilderness, where their first years must be spent

in toil to clear the ground which is afterward to be tilled, and that the whole effect of their undertaking is only more fatigue and equal scarcity.

157 Both accounts may be suspected. Those who are gone will endeavor by every art to draw others after them; for as their numbers are greater, they will provide better for themselves. When Nova Scotia was first peopled,<sup>52</sup> I remember a letter, published under the character of a New Planter, who related how much the climate put him in mind of Italy. Such intelligence the Hebridians probably receive from their transmarine correspondents. But with equal temptations of interest, and perhaps with no greater niceness of veracity, the owners of the islands spread stories of American hardships to keep their people content at home.

158 Some method to stop this epidemic desire of wandering, which spreads its contagion from valley to valley, deserves to be sought with great diligence. In more fruitful countries, the removal of one only makes room for the succession of another: but in the Hebrides, the loss of an inhabitant leaves a lasting vacuity.<sup>o</sup>

159 Let it be inquired, whether the first intention of those who are fluttering on the wing, and collecting a flock that they may take their flight, be to attain good, or to avoid evil? If they are dissatisfied with that part of the globe which their birth has allotted them, and resolve not to live without the pleasures of happier climates; if they long for bright suns, and calm skies, and flowery fields,

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<sup>52</sup> It was first settled by the French in 1604, and named *Arcadia*. Later, it was settled by Scots, and named *Nova Scotia*. What popular poem had its origin in the struggle between England and France for possession?

and fragrant gardens, I know not by what eloquence they can be persuaded, or by what offers they can be hired, to stay.

160 But if they are driven from their native country by positive evils, and disgusted by ill treatment, real or imaginary, it were fit to remove their grievances, and quiet their resentment; since, if they have been hitherto undutiful subjects, they will not much mend their principles by American conversation.<sup>°</sup> <sup>53</sup>

161 To allure them into the army, it was thought proper to indulge them in the continuance of their national dress. If this concession could have any effect, it might easily be made. That dissimilitude<sup>°</sup> of appearance, which was supposed to keep them distinct from the rest of the nation, might disincline them from coalescing<sup>°</sup> with the Pennsylvanians or people of Connecticut. If the restitution of their arms will reconcile them to their country, let them have again those weapons, which will not be more mischievous at home than in the Colonies. That they may not fly from the increase of rent, I know not whether the general good does not require that the landlords be, for a time, restrained in their demands, and kept quiet by pensions proportionate to their loss.

162 To hinder insurrection by driving away the people, and to govern peaceably by having no subjects, is an expedient that argues no great profundity<sup>°</sup> of politics. To soften the obdurate,<sup>°</sup> to convince the mistaken, to mollify<sup>°</sup> the resentful, are worthy of a statesman; but it affords a legislator little self-applause to consider that, where there was formerly an insurrection, there is now a wilderness.

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<sup>53</sup> Mingling with the Americans. The Doctor did not approve of the rebellious sentiments of the Colonists.

**163** England has for several years been filled with the achievements of seventy thousand Highlanders employed in America. I have heard from an English officer, not much inclined to favor them, that their behavior deserved a very high degree of military praise; but their number has been much exaggerated. One of the ministers told me that seventy thousand men could not have been found in all the Highlands, and that more than twelve thousand never took the field. Those that went to the American war went to destruction. Of the old Highland regiment, consisting of twelve hundred, only seventy-six survived to see their country again.

**164** The habitations of men in the Hebrides may be distinguished into huts and houses. By a house, I mean a building with one story over another; by a hut, a dwelling with only one floor. The laird, who formerly lived in a castle, now lives in a house; sometimes sufficiently neat, but seldom very spacious or splendid. The tacksmen and the ministers have commonly houses. Wherever there is a house, the stranger finds a welcome, and to the other evils of exterminating tacksmen may be added the unavoidable cessation of hospitality, or the devolution <sup>54</sup> of too heavy a burden on the ministers.

**165** The house and the furniture are not always nicely suited.<sup>o</sup> <sup>55</sup> We were driven once, by missing a passage, to the hut of a gentleman, where, after a very liberal supper, when I was conducted to my chamber, I found an elegant bed of Indian cotton, spread with fine sheets. The accommodation was flattering; I undressed myself, and felt my feet in the mire. The bed stood upon the

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<sup>54</sup> letting down.

<sup>55</sup> adapted to each other.

bare earth, which a long course of rain had softened to a puddle.

166 In pastoral countries the condition of the lowest rank of people is sufficiently wretched. Among manufacturers, men that have no property may have art and industry, which make them necessary, and therefore valuable. But where flocks and corn are the only wealth, there are always more hands than work, and of that work there is little in which skill and dexterity can be much distinguished. He therefore who is born poor never can be rich. The son merely occupies the place of the father, and life knows nothing of progression or advancement.

The petty tenants, and laboring peasants, live in miserable cabins, which afford them little more than shelter from the storms.

167 Their food is not better than their lodging. They seldom taste the flesh of land animals; for here are no markets. What each man eats is from his own stock. The great effect of money is to break property into small parts. In towns, he that has a shilling may have a piece of meat; but where there is no commerce, no man can eat mutton but by killing a sheep.

Fish in fair weather they need not want; but, I believe, man never lives long on fish, but by constraint; he will rather feed upon roots and berries.

168 The only fuel of the islands is peat. Their wood is all consumed, and coal they have not yet found. Peat is dug out of the marshes, from the depth of one foot to that of six. That is accounted the best which is nearest the surface. It appears to be a mass of black earth held together by vegetable fibers. I know not whether the earth be bituminous,<sup>o</sup> or whether the fibers be not the



only combustible part, which, by heating the interposed earth red hot, make a burning mass. The heat is not very strong nor lasting. The ashes are yellowish, and in a large quantity. When they dig peat, they cut it into square pieces, and pile it up to dry beside the house. In some places it has an offensive smell. It is like wood charked<sup>o</sup> for the smith. The common method of making peat fires is by heaping it on the hearth; but it burns well in grates, and in the best houses is so used.

**169** The islands afford few pleasures, except to the hardy sportsman, who can tread the moor and climb the mountain. The distance of one family from another, in a country where traveling has so much difficulty, makes frequent intercourse impracticable. Visits last several days, and are commonly paid by-water; yet I never saw a boat furnished with benches, or made commodious by any addition to the first fabric. Conveniences are not missed where they never were enjoyed.

**170** The solace which the bagpipe can give they have long enjoyed; but among other changes, which the last revolution introduced, the use of the bagpipe begins to be forgotten. Some of the chief families still entertain a piper, whose office was anciently hereditary. Macrimmon was a piper to Macleod, and Rankin to Maclean of Col.

**171** The tunes of the bagpipe are traditional. There has been in Skye, beyond all time of memory, a college of pipers under the direction of Macrimmon, which is not quite extinct. I have had my dinner exhilarated<sup>o</sup> by the bagpipe at Armidel, at Dunvegan, and at Col.

**172** The religion of the islands is that of the kirk of Scotland. The gentlemen with whom I conversed are all

inclined to the English liturgy<sup>o</sup>; but they are obliged to maintain the established minister, and the country is too poor to afford payment to another, who must live wholly on the contribution of his audience.

173 The ancient rigor of puritanism is now very much relaxed, though all are not yet equally enlightened. I sometimes met with prejudices sufficiently malignant, but they were prejudices of ignorance. The ministers in the islands had attained such knowledge as may justly be admired in men, who have no motive to study but generous curiosity, or, what is still better, desire of usefulness; with such politeness as so narrow a circle of converse could not have supplied, but to minds naturally disposed to elegance.<sup>o</sup>

174 Reason and truth will prevail at last. The most learned of the Scottish doctors would now gladly admit a form of prayer, if the people would endure it. The zeal or rage of congregations has its different degrees. In some parishes the Lord's Prayer is suffered: in others it is still rejected as a form, and he that should make it part of his supplication would be suspected of heretical pravity.<sup>o</sup>

175 The principle upon which extemporary prayer was originally introduced is no longer admitted. The minister formerly, in the effusion of his prayer, expected immediate, and perhaps perceptible inspiration, and therefore thought it his duty not to think before what he should say. It is now universally confessed that men pray as they speak on other occasions, according to the general measure of their abilities and attainments.

176 The political tenets<sup>56</sup> of the-islanders I was not curious

<sup>56</sup> doctrines or beliefs one holds.

to investigate, and they were not eager to obtrude. Their conversation is decent and inoffensive. They disdain to drink for their principles, and there is no disaffection at their tables. I never heard a health offered by a Highlander that might not have circulated with propriety within the precincts of the king's palace.

**177** Legal government has yet something of novelty to which they cannot perfectly conform. The ancient spirit that appealed only to the sword is yet among them. The tenant of Scalpa, an island belonging to Macdonald, took no care to bring his rent; when the landlord talked of exacting payment, he declared his resolution to keep his ground and drive all intruders from the island, and continued to feed his cattle as on his own land, till it became necessary for the sheriff to dislodge him by violence.

**178** The various kinds of superstition which prevailed here, as in all other regions of ignorance, are by the diligence of the ministers almost extirpated.

Of Brownie, nothing has been heard for many years. Brownie was a sturdy fairy, who, if he was fed and kindly treated, would, as they said, do a great deal of work. They now pay him no wages, and are content to labor for themselves.

In Troda, within these three and thirty years, milk was put every Saturday for Greogach, or the Old Man with the Long Beard. Whether Greogach was courted as kind, or dreaded as terrible, whether they meant, by giving him the milk, to obtain good or avert evil, I was not informed. The minister is now living by whom the practice was abolished.

**179** They have opinions which cannot be ranked with

superstition, because they regard only natural effects. They expect better crops of grain, by sowing their seed in the moon's increase. The moon has great influence in vulgar <sup>57</sup> philosophy. In my memory it was a precept annually given in one of the English almanacs, "to kill hogs when the moon was increasing, and the bacon would prove the better in boiling." <sup>58</sup>

180 We should have had little claim to the praise of curiosity, <sup>59</sup> if we had not endeavored with particular attention to examine the question of the Second Sight. <sup>60</sup> Of an opinion received for centuries by a whole nation, and supposed to be confirmed through its whole descent by a series of successive facts, it is desirable that the truth should be established, or the fallacy detected.

181 The Second Sight is an impression made either by the mind upon the eye or by the eye upon the mind, by which things distant or future are perceived and seen as if they were present. A man on a journey far from home falls from his horse; another, who is perhaps at work about the house, sees him bleeding on the ground, commonly with a landscape of the place where the accident befalls him. Things distant are seen at the instant when they happen. Of things future I know not that there is any rule for determining the time between the sight and the event.

182 This receptive faculty, for power it cannot be called, is neither voluntary nor constant. The appearances have

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<sup>57</sup> common. This is still true.

<sup>58</sup> That "almanack" is not completely out of date in America.

<sup>59</sup> A commendable love of knowledge.

<sup>60</sup> "That bards are second sighted is no joke,  
And ken the lingo of the spiritual folk."

— Burns,

no dependence upon choice: they cannot be summoned, detained, or recalled. The impression is sudden, and the effect often painful.

**183** By pretensions to Second Sight, no profit was ever sought or gained. It is an involuntary affection, in which neither hope nor fear are known to have any part. Those who profess to feel it do not boast of it as a privilege, nor are considered by others as advantageously distinguished. They have no temptation to feign, and their hearers have no motive to encourage, the imposture.

**184** To talk with any of these seers is not easy. There is one living in Skye, with whom we would have gladly conversed; but he was very gross and ignorant, and knew no English. The proportion in these countries of the poor to the rich is such, that if we suppose the quality to be accidental, it can very rarely happen to a man of education; and yet on such men it has sometimes fallen. There is now a second-sighted gentleman in the Highlands, who complains of the terrors to which he is exposed.

**185** The foresight of the seers is not always prescience<sup>o</sup>: they are impressed with images, of which the event only shows them the meaning. They tell what they have seen to others, who are at that time not more knowing than themselves, but may become at last very adequate witnesses, by comparing the narrative with its verification.

**186** To collect sufficient testimonies for the satisfaction of the public, or of ourselves, would have required more time than we could bestow. There is against it, the seeming analogy of things confusedly seen, and little understood: and for it, the indistinct cry of national persuasion, which may be perhaps resolved at last into preju-

dice and tradition. I never could advance my curiosity to conviction; but came away at last only willing to believe.

**187** As there subsists no longer in the islands much of that peculiar and discriminative form of life, of which the idea had delighted our imagination, we were willing to listen to such accounts of past times as would be given us. But we soon found what memorials were to be expected from an illiterate people, whose whole time is a series of distress; where every morning is laboring with expedients for the evening; and where all mental pains or pleasure arose from the dread of winter, the expectation of the spring, the caprices of their chiefs, and the motions of the neighboring clans.

**188** The chiefs, indeed, were exempt from urgent penury and daily difficulties; and in their houses were preserved what accounts remained of past ages. But the chiefs were sometimes ignorant and careless, and sometimes kept busy by turbulence<sup>o</sup> and contention; and one generation of ignorance effaces the whole series of unwritten history.<sup>61</sup> Books are faithful repositories, which may be awhile neglected or forgotten; but when they are opened again, will again impart their instruction: memory, once interrupted, is not to be recalled. Written learning is a fixed luminary, which after the cloud that had hidden it has passed away, is again bright in its proper station. Tradition is but a meteor, which, if once it falls, cannot be rekindled.

**189** It seems to be universally supposed, that much of the

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<sup>61</sup> "The noblest written words are commonly as far behind or above the fleeting spoken language as the firmament with its stars is behind the clouds."—*Thoreau's Walden*.



local history was preserved by the bards, of whom one is said to have been retained by every great family. After these bards were some of my first inquiries: and I received such answers as, for awhile, made me please myself with my increase of knowledge, for I had not then learned how to estimate the narration of a Highlander. 190 They said that a great family had a bard and a senachie, who were the poet and historian of the house; and an old gentleman told me that he remembered one of each. Here was a dawn of intelligence.<sup>62</sup> Of men that had lived within memory, some certain knowledge might be attained. Though the office had ceased, its effects might continue; the poems might be found though there was no poet.

191 Another conversation, indeed, informed me that the same man was both bard and senachie. This variation discouraged me; but as the practice might be different in different times, or at the same time in different families, there was yet no reason for supposing that I must necessarily sit down in total ignorance.

192 Soon after I was told by a gentleman, who is generally acknowledged the greatest master of Hebridian antiquities, that there had indeed once been both bards and senachies; and that senachie signified the man of talk or of conversation; but that neither bard nor senachie had existed for some centuries. I have no reason to suppose it exactly known at what time the custom ceased, nor did it probably cease in all houses at once. But whenever the practice of recitation was disused, the works, whether poetical or historical, perished with the

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<sup>62</sup> a beginning of knowledge.

authors; for in those times nothing had been written in the Erse language.

**193** Whether the man of talk was an historian, whose office was to tell truth, or a story-teller, like those which were in the last century,<sup>63</sup> and perhaps are now among the Irish, whose trade was only to amuse, it now would be vain to inquire.

**194** Most of the domestic offices were, I believe, hereditary; and probably the laureate<sup>64</sup> of a clan was always the son of the last laureate. The history of the race could not otherwise be communicated or retained; but what genius could be expected in a poet by inheritance?<sup>65</sup>

**195** The payment of rent in kind has been so long disused in England, that it is totally forgotten. It was practiced very lately in the Hebrides, and probably still continues, not only at St. Kilda,<sup>66</sup> where money is not yet known, but in others of the smaller and remoter islands. It were perhaps to be desired, that no change in this particular should have been made. Money confounds subordination, by overpowering the distinctions of rank and birth, and weakens authority, by supplying power of resistance, or expedients for escape. The feudal<sup>67</sup> system is formed for a nation employed in agriculture, and has never long kept its hold where gold and silver have become common.

**196** After all that has been said of the force and terror

<sup>63</sup> This office has been revived.

<sup>64</sup> Who is the present laureate of the kingdom?

<sup>65</sup> Yet Dr. Johnson would have stoutly defended the right of the eldest son of the king to succeed him, genius or no genius.

<sup>66</sup> Forty miles west of North Uist.

<sup>67</sup> A system by which the holding of an estate, or feud, was dependent upon military service to be paid the king or other superior.

of the Highland sword, I could not find that the art of defense was any part of common education. The gentlemen were perhaps sometimes skillful gladiators, but the common men had no other powers than those of violence and courage. Yet it is well known that the onset of the Highlanders was very formidable.

197 The Highland weapons gave opportunity for many exertions of personal courage, and sometimes for single combats in the field; like those which occur so frequently in fabulous wars. At Falkirk, a gentleman now living was, I suppose, after the retreat of the king's troops, engaged at a distance from the rest with an Irish dragoon. They were both skillful swordsmen, and the contest was not easily decided: the dragoon at last had the advantage, and the Highlander called for quarter; but quarter was refused him, and the fight continued till he was reduced to defend himself upon his knee. At that instant one of the Macleods came to his rescue, who, as it is said, offered quarter to the dragoon; but he thought himself obliged to reject what he had before refused, and, as battle gives little time to deliberate, was immediately killed.

198 Of the Erse language, as I understand nothing, I cannot say more than I have been told. It is the rude speech of a barbarous people who had few thoughts to express, and were content, as they conceived <sup>68</sup> grossly, <sup>69</sup> to be grossly <sup>69</sup> understood.<sup>70</sup> After what has been lately

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<sup>68</sup> thought.

<sup>69</sup> Without fine discrimination.

<sup>70</sup> Dr. Johnson sounds a note of defiance in the ears of those who believed that Ossian was a reality and that Macpherson only translated Ossian's poems into English. Hugh Miller somewhere speaks of certain Erse poems as "translated from their original English."

talked of Highland bards and Highland genius, many will startle when they are told that the Erse never was a written language; that there is not in the world an Erse manuscript a hundred years old; and that the sounds of the Highlanders were never expressed by letters till some little books of piety were translated, and a metrical version of the Psalms was made by the synod of Argyle. Whoever, therefore, now writes in this language spells according to his own perception of the sound and his own idea of the power of the letters. The Welsh and the Irish are cultivated tongues. The Welsh, two hundred years ago, insulted their English neighbors for the instability of their orthography; while the Erse merely floated in the breath of the people, and could therefore receive little improvement.

**199** When a language begins to teem with books, it is tending to refinement, as those who undertake to teach others must have undergone some labor in improving themselves; they set a proportionate value on their own thoughts, and wish to enforce them by efficacious expressions; speech becomes embodied and permanent; different modes and phrases are compared, and the best obtains an establishment. By degrees one age improves upon another. Exactness is first obtained, and afterward elegance. But diction, merely vocal, is always in its childhood. As no man leaves his eloquence behind him, the new generations have all to learn. There may possibly be books without a polished language, but there can be no polished language without books.

**200** That the bards could not read more than the rest of their countrymen it is reasonable to suppose, because if they had read they could probably have written; and

how high their compositions may reasonably be rated, an inquirer may best judge by considering what stores of imagery, what principles of ratiocination,<sup>71</sup> what comprehension of knowledge, and what delicacy of elocution he has known any man attain who cannot read. The state of the bards was yet more hopeless. He that cannot read may now converse with those that can; but the bard was a barbarian among barbarians, who, knowing nothing himself, lived with others that knew no more. 201 In an unwritten speech, nothing that is not very short is transmitted from one generation to another. Few have opportunities of hearing a long composition often enough to learn it, or have inclination to repeat it so often as is necessary to retain it; and what is once forgotten is lost forever. I believe there cannot be recovered in the whole Erse language five hundred lines of which there is any evidence to prove them a hundred years old. Yet I hear that the father<sup>72</sup> of Ossian boasts of two chests more of ancient poetry, which he suppresses, because they are too good for the English. 202 He that goes into the Highlands with a mind naturally acquiescent,<sup>o</sup> and a credulity eager for wonders, may come back with an opinion very different from mine; for the inhabitants, knowing the ignorance of all strangers in their language and antiquities, perhaps are not very scrupulous<sup>o</sup> adherents to truth; yet I do not say that they deliberately speak studied falsehood, or have a settled purpose to deceive.

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<sup>71</sup> reasoning.

<sup>72</sup> Macpherson, a Scotch poet, who is now generally believed to have composed in English what he claimed to have translated from the writings of an alleged Erse poet named Ossian.

203 Mr. Boswell was very diligent in his inquiries; and the result of his investigations was, that the answer to the second question was commonly such as nullified the answer to the first.

We were awhile told, that they had an old translation of the Scriptures; and told it till it would appear obstinacy to inquire again. Yet by continued accumulation of questions we found that the translation meant, if any meaning there were, was nothing else than the Irish Bible.

We heard of manuscripts that were, or that had been, in the hands of somebody's father or grandfather; but at last we had no reason to believe they were other than Irish.

204 I suppose my opinion<sup>73</sup> of the poems of Ossian is already discovered. I believe they never existed in any other form than that which we have seen. The editor, or author, never could show the original; nor can it be shown by any other; to revenge reasonable incredulity,<sup>o</sup> by refusing evidence, is a degree of insolence, with which the world is not yet acquainted; and the stubborn audacity<sup>o</sup> is the last refuge of guilt. It would be easy to show it if he had it; but whence could it be had? It is too long to be remembered, and the language formerly had nothing written. He has doubtless inserted names that circulated in popular stories, and may have translated some wandering ballads, if any can be found; and the names, and some of the images, being recollected, make an inaccurate auditor imagine, by the help of

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<sup>73</sup> Macpherson threatened to cane Johnson for the blunt expression of his "opinion," but the sturdy Doctor provided himself with a cudgel, and the author of "Fingal" thought better of it.



Caledonian bigotry,<sup>o</sup> that he has formerly heard the whole.

**205** I asked a very learned minister in Skye, who had used all arts to make me believe the genuineness<sup>o</sup> of the book, whether at last he believed it himself? but he would not answer. He wished me to be deceived for the honor of his country, but would not directly and formally deceive me. Yet has this man's testimony been publicly produced, as of one that held "Fingal"<sup>74</sup> to be the work of Ossian.

**206** It is said, that some men of integrity<sup>o</sup> profess to have heard parts of it, but they all heard them when they were boys; and it was never said that any of them could recite six lines. They remember names, and perhaps some proverbial<sup>o</sup> sentiments; and having no distinct ideas, coin a resemblance without an original. The persuasion<sup>o</sup> <sup>75</sup> of the Scots, however, is far from universal; and in a question so capable of proof, why should doubt be suffered to continue? The editor has been heard to say, that part of the poem was received by him in the Saxon character. He has then found, by some peculiar fortune, an unwritten language, written in a character which the natives probably never beheld.<sup>76</sup>

**207** I have yet supposed no imposture but in the publisher; yet I am far from certainty, that some translations have not been lately made, that may now be obtruded<sup>o</sup> as parts of the original work. Credulity on one part is a strong temptation to deceit on the other, especially to deceit of which no personal injury is the

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<sup>74</sup> The leading character in Ossian's poems.

<sup>75</sup> Opinion, conviction, belief.

<sup>76</sup> Fine irony.

consequence, and which flatters the author with his own ingenuity.<sup>o</sup> The Scots have something to plead for their easy reception of an improbable fiction: they are seduced by their fondness for their supposed ancestors. A Scotchman must be a very sturdy moralist, who does not love Scotland better than truth; he will always love it better than inquiry: and if falsehood flatters his vanity, will not be very diligent to detect it. Neither ought the English to be much influenced by Scotch authority; for of the past and present state of the whole Erse nation, the Lowlanders are at least as ignorant as ourselves. To be ignorant is painful; but it is dangerous to quiet our uneasiness by the delusive opiate<sup>o</sup> of hasty persuasion.

208 But this is the age in which those who could not read, have been supposed to write; in which the giants of antiquated romance have been exhibited as realities. If we know little of the ancient Highlanders, let us not fill the vacuity<sup>o</sup> with Ossian. If we have not searched the Magellanic regions,<sup>77</sup> let us however forbear to people them with Patagons.<sup>78</sup>

209 Having waited some days at 'Armidel, we were flattered<sup>o</sup> at last with a wind that promised to convey us to Mull. We went on board a boat that was taking in kelp, and left the isle of Skye behind us. We were doomed to experience, like others, the danger of trusting to the wind, which blew against us, in a short time, with such violence, that we, being no seasoned<sup>o</sup> sailors, were willing to call it a tempest.<sup>o</sup> I was seasick, and lay down. Mr. Boswell kept the deck. The

<sup>77</sup> Regions near the strait of Magellan.

<sup>78</sup> Patagonians.

master knew not well whither to go; and our difficulties might perhaps have filled a very pathetic page, had not Mr. Maclean of Col, who, with every other qualification which insular life requires, is a very active and skillful mariner, piloted us safe into his own harbor.

## COL.

**210** In the morning we found ourselves under the isle of Col, where we landed, and passed the first day and night with Captain Maclean, a gentleman who has lived some time in the East Indies, but having dethroned no Nabob,<sup>79</sup> is not too rich to settle in his own country.

**211** Next day the wind was fair, and we might have had an easy passage to Mull; but having, contrarily to our own intention, landed upon a new island, we would not leave it wholly unexamined. We therefore suffered the vessel to depart without us, and trusted the skies for another wind.

**212** Mr. Maclean of Col, having a very numerous family, has, for some time past, resided at Aberdeen, that he may superintend their education, and leaves the young gentleman, our friend, to govern his dominions, with the full power of a Highland chief. By the absence of the laird's family, our entertainment was made more difficult, because the house was in a great degree disfurnished<sup>o</sup>; but young Col's kindness and activity supplied all defects, and procured us more than sufficient accommodation.

**213** Here I first mounted a little Highland steed; and if there had been many spectators, should have been somewhat ashamed of my figure in the march. The horses of

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<sup>79</sup> Not like Clive or Hastings.

the islands, as of other barren countries, are very low: they are indeed musculous<sup>o</sup> and strong, beyond what their size gives reason for expecting; but a bulky man upon one of their backs makes a very disproportionate appearance.

**214** From the habitation of Captain Maclean we went to Grissipol, but called by the way on Mr. Hector Maclean, the minister of Col, whom we found in a hut, that is, a house of only one floor, but with windows and chimney, and not inelegantly furnished. Mr. Maclean has the reputation of great learning: he is seventy-seven years old, but not infirm, with a look of venerable dignity excelling what I remember in any other man.

**215** His conversation was not unsuitable to his appearance. I lost some of his good will, by treating a heretical writer with more regard than, in his opinion, a heretic could deserve. I honored his orthodoxy, and did not much censure his asperity.<sup>o</sup> A man who has settled his opinions, does not love to have the tranquillity of his conviction disturbed; and at seventy-seven it is time to be in earnest.

**216** Mention was made of the Erse translation of the New Testament, which has been lately published, and of which the learned Mr. Macqueen of Skye spoke with commendation<sup>o</sup>; but Mr. Maclean said, he did not use it, because he could make the text more intelligible to his auditors by an extemporary<sup>o</sup> version. From this I inferred, that the language of the translation was not the language of the isle of Col.

**217** He has no public edifice for the exercise of his ministry, and can officiate to no greater number than a room can contain, and the room of a hut is not very

large. This is all the opportunity of worship that is now granted to the inhabitants of the island, some of whom must travel thither perhaps ten miles. Two chapels were erected by their ancestors, of which I saw the skeletons, which now stand faithful witnesses of the triumph of Reformation.<sup>80</sup>

218 The want of churches is not the only impediment to piety: there is likewise a want of ministers. A parish often contains more islands than one; and each island can have a minister only in its own turn. At Raasay, they had, I think, a right to service only every third Sunday. All the provision made by the present ecclesiastical constitution, for the inhabitants of about a hundred square miles, is a prayer and sermon in a little room, once in three weeks; and even this parsimonious<sup>o</sup> distribution is at the mercy of the weather: and in those islands where the minister does not reside, it is impossible to tell how many weeks or months may pass without any public exercise of religion.

## GRISSIPOL IN COL.

219 After a short conversation with Mr. Maclean, we went on to Grissipol, a house and farm tenanted by Mr. Macsweyn, where I saw more of the ancient life of a Highlander than I had yet found. Mrs. Macsweyn could speak no English, and had never seen any other places than the islands of Skye, Mull, and Col; but she was hospitable and good-humored, and spread her table with sufficient liberality. We found tea here, as in every other place, but our spoons were of horn.

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<sup>80</sup> Wide-open irony.

220 The house of Grissipol stands by a brook very clear and quick, which is, I suppose, one of the most copious streams in the island. This place was the scene of an action, much celebrated in the traditional history of Col, but which probably no two relaters will tell alike.

221 Some time, in the obscure ages, Macneil of Barra married the lady Maclean, who had the isle of Col for her jointure. Whether Macneil detained Col, when the widow was dead, or whether she lived so long as to make her heirs impatient, is perhaps not now known. The younger son, called John Gerves, or John the Giant, a man of great strength, who was then in Ireland, either for safety or for education, dreamed of recovering his inheritance; and getting some adventurers together, which in those unsettled times was not hard to do, invaded Col. He was driven away, but was not discouraged, and, collecting new followers, in three years came again with fifty men. In his way he stopped at Artorinish in Morven, where his uncle was prisoner to Macleod, and was then with his enemies in a tent. Maclean took with him only one servant, whom he ordered to stay at the outside, and where he should see the tent pressed outward, to strike with his dirk, it being the intention of Maclean, as any man provoked him, to lay hands upon him and push him back. He entered the tent alone, with his Lochaber axe in his hand, and struck such terror into the whole assembly that they dismissed his uncle.

222 When he landed at Col, he saw the sentinel, who kept watch toward the sea, running off to Grissipol, to give Macneil, who was there with a hundred and twenty men, an account of the invasion. He told to Macgill, one



of his followers, that if he intercepted that dangerous intelligence, by catching the courier, he would give him certain lands in Mull. Upon this promise, Macgill pursued the messenger, and either killed or stopped him; and his posterity, till very lately, held the lands in Mull.

**223** The alarm being thus prevented, he came unexpectedly upon Macneil. Chiefs were in those days never wholly unprovided for an enemy. A fight ensued, in which one of the followers is said to have given an extraordinary proof of activity, by bounding backward over the brook of Grissipol. Macneil being killed, and many of his clan destroyed, Maclean took possession of the island, which the Macneils attempted to conquer by another invasion, but were defeated and repulsed.

## CASTLE OF COL.

**224** From Grissipol Mr. Maclean conducted us to his father's seat; a neat new house erected near the old castle, I think by the last proprietor. Here we were allowed to take our station, and lived very commodiously, while we waited for moderate weather and a fair wind, which we did not so soon obtain; but we had time to get some information of the present state of Col, partly by inquiry and partly by occasional excursions.

**225** Col is computed to be thirteen miles in length and three in breadth. Both the ends are the property of the Duke of Argyle, but the middle belongs to Maclean, who is called Col, as the only laird.

**226** Col is not properly rocky; it is rather one continued rock, of a surface much diversified with protuberances,<sup>o</sup> and covered with a thin layer of earth, which is often broken, and discovers the stone. Such a soil is not for

plants that strike deep roots; and perhaps in the whole island nothing has ever yet grown to the height of a table. The uncultivated parts are clothed with heath, among which industry has interspersed° spots of grass and corns; but no attempt has been made to raise a tree. Young Col, who has a very laudable° desire of improving his patrimony,° purposes some time to plant an orchard; which, if it be sheltered by a wall, may perhaps succeed. He has introduced the culture of turnips, of which he has a field, where the whole work was performed by his own hand. His intention is to provide food for his cattle in the winter. This innovation° was considered by Mr. Macsweyn as the idle project of a young head, heated with English fancies; but he has now found that turnips will really grow, and that hungry sheep and cows will really eat them.

227 The harvest in Col and in Lewis is ripe sooner than in Skye, and the winter in Col is never cold, but very tempestuous. I know not that I ever heard the wind so loud in any other place; and Mr. Boswell observed that its noise was all its own, for there were no trees to increase it.

228 Noise is not the worst effect of the tempests: for they have thrown sand from the shore over a considerable part of the land, and is said still to encroach and destroy more and more pasture; but I am not of opinion that by any surveys or landmarks its limits have been ever fixed or its progression ascertained.

229 We were at Col under the protection of the young laird. Wherever we roved, we were pleased to see the reverence with which his subjects regarded him. He did not endeavor to dazzle them by any magnificence of dress; his only distinction was a feather in his bonnet;

but as soon as he appeared, they forsook their work and clustered about him: he took them by the hand, and they seemed mutually delighted. He has the proper disposition of a chieftain, and seems desirous to continue the customs of his house. The bagpiper played regularly, when dinner was served, whose person and dress made a good appearance: and he brought no disgrace upon the family of Rankin, which has long supplied the lairds of Col with hereditary music.

230 The tacksmen of Col seem to live with less dignity and convenience than those of Skye, where they had good houses, and tables not only plentiful, but delicate.<sup>o</sup> In Col only two houses pay the window tax: for only two have six windows, which I suppose, are the laird's and Mr. Macsweyn's.

231 The rents have, till within seven years, been paid in kind; but the tenants, finding that cattle and corn varied in their price, desired for the future to give their landlord money; which, not having yet arrived at the philosophy of commerce, they consider as being every year of the same value.

232 There are tenants below the rank of tacksmen, that have got smaller tenants under them; for in every place, where money is not the general equivalent, there must be some whose labor is immediately paid by daily food.

233 A country that has no money is by no means convenient for beggars, both because such countries are commonly poor, and because charity requires some trouble and some thought. A penny is easily given upon the first impulse of compassion, or impatience of importunity; but few will deliberately search their cupboards or their granaries to find out something to give.

234 Yet beggars there sometimes are, who wander from

island to island. We had, in our passage to Mull, the company of a woman and her child, who had exhausted the charity of Col. The arrival of a beggar on an island is accounted a sinistrous<sup>o</sup> event. Everybody considers that he shall have the less for what he gives away. Their alms, I believe, is generally oatmeal.

235 Near to Col is another island called Tirey, eminent for its fertility. Though it has but half the extent of Rum, it is so well peopled, that there have appeared not long ago, nine hundred and fourteen at a funeral. The plenty of this island enticed beggars to it, who seemed so burthensome to the inhabitants, that a formal compact was drawn up, by which they obliged themselves to grant no more relief to casual<sup>o</sup> wanderers, because they had among them an indigent<sup>o</sup> woman of high birth, whom they considered as entitled to all that they could spare. I have read the stipulation,<sup>o</sup> which was indited<sup>o</sup> with juridical formality, but was never made valid by regular subscription.<sup>o</sup>

236 If the inhabitants of Col have nothing to give, it is not that they are oppressed by their landlord; their leases seem to be very profitable. One farmer, who pays only seven pounds a year, has maintained seven daughters and three sons, of whom the eldest is educated at Aberdeen for the ministry; and now at every vacation opens a school in Col.

237 Life is here, in some respects, improved beyond the condition of some other islands. In Skye, what is wanted can only be bought, as the arrival of some wandering peddler may afford an opportunity; but in Col there is a standing shop, and in Mull there are two. A shop in the islands, as in other places of little frequen-

tation, is a repository of everything requisite for common use. Mr. Boswell's journal<sup>81</sup> was filled, and he bought some paper in Col. To a man that ranges the streets of London, where he is tempted to contrive waits for the pleasure of supplying them, a shop affords no image worthy of attention; but in an island, it turns the balance of existence between good and evil. To live in perpetual want of little things is a state not indeed of torture, but of constant vexation. I have in Skye had some difficulty to find ink for a letter; and if a woman breaks her needle, the work is at a stop.

238 As it is, the islanders are obliged to content themselves with succedaneous<sup>o</sup> means for many common purposes. I have seen the chief man of a very wide district riding with a halter for a bridle, and governing his hobby<sup>o</sup> with a wooden curb.

239 The people of Col, however, do not want dexterity to supply some of their necessities. Several arts which make trades, and demand apprenticeships in great cities, are here the practices of daily economy. In every house candles are made, both molded and dipped. Their wicks are small shreds of linen cloth. They all know how to extract from the cuddy oil for their lamps. They all tan skins, and make brogues.

240 As we traveled through Skye, we saw many cottages, but they very frequently stood single on the naked ground. In Col, where the hills opened a place convenient for habitation, we found a pretty village, of which every hut had a little garden adjoining. There is not in the Western Islands any collection of buildings

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<sup>81</sup> Used in Boswell's *Johnson*.

that can make pretensions to be called a town, except in the isle of Lewis,<sup>82</sup> which I have not seen.

241 If Lewis is distinguished by a town, Col has also something peculiar. The young laird has attempted what no islander, perhaps, ever thought on. He had begun a road capable of a wheel carriage. He has carried it about a mile, and will continue it by annual elongation from his house to the harbor.

242 Of taxes here is no reason for complaining; they are paid by a very easy composition. The malt tax for Col is twenty shillings. Whisky is very plentiful; there are several stills in the island, and more is made than the inhabitants consume.

243 The inhabitants of Col have not yet learned to be weary of their heath and rocks, but attend their agriculture and their dairies, without listening to American seducements.<sup>o</sup>

244 There are some, however, who think that this emigration has raised terror disproportionate to its real evil; and that it is only a new mode of doing what was always done. The Highlands, they say, never maintained their natural inhabitants; but the people, when they found themselves too numerous, instead of extending cultivation, provided for themselves by a more compendious<sup>o</sup> method, and sought better fortune in other countries. They did not, indeed, go away in collective bodies, but withdrew invisibly, a few at a time; but the whole number of fugitives was not less, and the difference between other times and this, is only the same as between evaporation and effusion.

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<sup>82</sup> Lies northwest of Skye; it is one of the scenes of Black's *A Princess of Thule*.



245 This is plausible, but I am afraid it is not true. Those who went before, if they were not sensibly missed, as the argument supposes, must have gone either in less number, or in a manner less detrimental than at present; because formerly there was no complaint. Those who then left the country were generally the idle dependents on over-burdened families, or men who had no property; and therefore carried away only themselves. In the present eagerness of emigration, families and almost communities, go away together. Those who were considered as prosperous and wealthy, sell their stock and carry away the money. Once none went away but the useless and poor; in some parts there is now reason to fear that none will stay but those who are too poor to remove themselves, and too useless to be removed at the cost of others.

246 Mr. Maclean informed us of an old game, of which he did not tell the original, but which may perhaps be used in other places, where the reason of it is not yet forgot. At New Year's eve, in the hall or castle of the laird, where, at festal seasons, there may be supposed a very numerous company, one man dresses himself in a cow's hide, upon which other men beat with sticks. He runs with all this noise round the house, which all the company quits in a counterfeited fright: the door is then shut. At New Year's eve there is no great pleasure to be had out of doors in the Hebrides. They are sure soon to recover from their terror enough to solicit for re-admission: which, for the honor of poetry, is not to be obtained but by repeating a verse, with which those that are knowing and provident<sup>o</sup> take care to be furnished.

247 Very near the house of Maclean stands the castle of

Col, which was the mansion of the laird, till the house was built. It is built upon a rock, as Mr. Boswell remarked, that it might not be mined. It is very strong, and having been not long uninhabited, is yet in repair. On the wall was, not long ago, a stone with an inscription, importing, "That if any man of the clan of Mac-lonich shall appear before this castle, though he come at midnight, with a man's head in his hand, he shall there find safety and protection against all but the king."

248 After having listened for some days to the tempest and wandered about the island till our curiosity was satisfied, we began to think about our departure. To leave Col in October was not very easy. We, however, found a sloop which lay on the coast to carry kelp; and for a price, which we thought levied<sup>o</sup> upon our necessities, the master agreed to carry us to Mull, whence we might readily pass back to Scotland.

#### MULL.

249 As we were to catch the first favorable breath,<sup>o</sup> we spent the night not very elegantly nor pleasantly in the vessel, and were landed next day at Tabor Morar, a port in Mull, which appears to an unexperienced eye formed for the security of ships; for the mouth is closed by a small island, which admits them through narrow channels into a basin sufficiently capacious. They are indeed safe from the sea, but there is a hollow between the mountains through which the wind issues from the land with very mischievous violence.

250 There was no danger while we were there, and we found several other vessels at anchor, so that the port had a very commercial appearance.

**251** The young laird of Col, who had determined not to let us lose his company while there was any difficulty remaining, came over with us. His influence soon appeared, for he procured us horses, and conducted us to the house of Doctor Maclean, where we found very kind entertainment and very pleasing conversation. Miss Maclean, who was born and had been bred at Glasgow, having removed with her father to Mull, added to other qualifications a great knowledge of the Erse language, which she had not learned in her childhood, but gained by study, and was the only interpreter of Erse poetry that I could ever find.

**252** The isle of Mull is perhaps in extent the third of the Hebrides. It is not broken by waters nor shot into promontories, but is a solid and compact mass, of breadth nearly equal to its length. Of the dimensions of the larger islands there is no knowledge approaching to exactness. I am willing to estimate it as containing about three hundred square miles.

**253** It is natural, in traversing this gloom of desolation, to inquire whether something may not be done to give nature a more cheerful face, and whether those hills and moors that afford heath, cannot with a little care and labor, bear something better? The first thought that occurs is to cover them with trees, for that in many of these naked regions trees will grow is evident, because stumps and roots are yet remaining; and the speculatist<sup>o</sup> hastily proceeds to censure that negligence and laziness that has omitted for so long a time so easy an improvement.

**254** To drop seeds into the ground and attend their growth, requires little labor and no skill. He who re-

members that all the woods, by which the wants of man have been supplied from the Deluge till now were self-grown, will not easily be persuaded to think all the art and preparation necessary which the georgic<sup>83</sup> writers prescribe to planters. Trees certainly have covered the earth with very little culture. They wave their tops among the rocks of Norway, and might thrive as well in the Highlands and Hebrides.

255 But there is a frightful interval between the seed and timber. He that calculates the growth of trees has the unwelcome remembrance of the shortness of life driven hard upon him. He knows that he is doing what will never benefit himself; and when he rejoices to see the stem rise, is disposed to repine that another shall cut it down.

256 Having not any experience of a journey in Mull, we had no doubt of reaching the sea by daylight, and therefore had not left Dr. Maclean's very early. We traveled diligently enough, but found the country, for road there was none, very difficult to pass. We were always struggling with some obstruction or other, and our vexation was not balanced by any gratification of the eye or mind. We were now long enough acquainted with hills and heath to have lost the emotion that they once raised whether pleasing or painful, and had our mind employed only on our own fatigue. We were, however, sure, under Col's protection, of escaping all real evils.

#### ULVA.

257 While we stood deliberating we were happily<sup>84</sup> es-

<sup>83</sup> relating to farming. Virgil called his poems an agriculture "Georgics."

<sup>84</sup> fortunately.

pied from an Irish ship that lay at anchor in the strait. The master saw that we wanted a passage, and with great civility sent us his boat, which quickly conveyed us to Ulva, where we were very liberally entertained by Mr. Macquarry.

**258** To Ulva we came in the dark, and left it before noon the next day. A very exact description, therefore, will not be expected.

**259** When the islanders were reproached with their ignorance, or insensibility of the wonders of Staffa,<sup>85</sup> they had not much to reply. They had indeed considered it little, because they had always seen it; and none but philosophers, nor they always, are struck with wonder otherwise than by novelty. How would it surprise an unenlightened plowman to hear a company of sober men inquiring by what power the hand tosses a stone, or why the stone, when it is tossed, falls to the ground!

#### INCH KENNETH.

**260** In the morning we went again into the boat, and were landed on Inch Kenneth, an island about a mile long and perhaps half-a-mile broad, remarkable for pleasantness and fertility. It is verdant and grassy, and fit both for pasture and tillage; but it has no trees. Its only inhabitants were Sir Allan Maclean and two young ladies, his daughters, with their servants.

**261** Sir Allan is the chieftain of the great clan of Maclean, which is said to claim the second place among the Highland families, yielding only to Macdonald. When

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<sup>85</sup> An adjacent small island of most interesting geological formation. Among its wonders is Fingal's Cave.

soldiers were lately wanting for the American war, application was made to Sir Allan, and he nominated° a hundred men for the service, who obeyed the summons, and bore arms under his command.

He had then, for some time, resided with the young ladies in Inch Kenneth, where he lives not only with plenty, but with elegance, having conveyed to his cottage a collection of books, and what else is necessary to make his hours pleasant.

262 When we landed, we all walked together to the mansion, where we found one cottage for Sir Allan, and I think two more for the domestics and the offices. We entered, and wanted little that palaces afford. Our room was neatly floored and well lighted; and our dinner, which was dressed in one of the other huts, was plentiful and delicate.

263 In the afternoon Sir Allan reminded us that the day was Sunday, which he never suffered to pass without some religious distinction, and invited us to partake in his acts of domestic worship; which I hope neither Mr. Boswell nor myself will be suspected of a disposition to refuse. The elder of the ladies read the English Service.

264 Inch Kenneth was once a seminary of ecclesiastics, subordinate, I suppose, to Icolmkill. Sir Allan had a mind to trace the foundation of the college, but neither I nor Mr. Boswell, who *bends* a keener *eye-on vacancy*, were able to perceive them.

265 We told Sir Allan our desire of visiting Icolmkill, and entreated him to give us his protection and his company. He thought proper to hesitate a little; but the ladies hinted, that as they knew he would not finally refuse, he would do better if he preserved the grace of ready com-



pliance. He took their advice, and promised to carry us on the morrow in his boat.

We passed the remaining part of the day in such amusements as were in our power. Sir Allan related the American campaign, and at evening one of the ladies played on her harpsichord, while Col and Mr. Boswell danced a Scottish reel with the other.

We could have been easily persuaded to a longer stay upon Inch Kenneth, but life will not be all passed in delight. The session at Edinburgh was approaching, from which Mr. Boswell could not be absent.

266 In the morning our boat was ready: it was high and strong. Sir Allan victualed it for the day, and provided able rowers. We now parted from the young laird of Col, who had treated us with so much kindness, and concluded his favors by consigning us to Sir Allan. Here we had the last embrace of this amiable man, who, while these pages were preparing to attest his virtues, perished in the passage between Ulva and Inch Kenneth.

267 At last we came to —

ICOLMKILL, OR IONA,

but found no convenience for landing. Our boat could not be forced very near the dry ground, and our Highlanders carried us over the water.

268 We were now treading that illustrious island which was once the luminary<sup>o</sup> of the Caledonian<sup>o</sup> regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion. To abstract the mind from all local emotion would be impossible if it were endeavored, and would be foolish if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power

of our senses; whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me and from my friends be such frigid philosophy as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona.<sup>86</sup>

**269** Besides the two principal churches, there are, I think, five chapels yet standing, and three more remembered. There are also crosses, of which two bear the names of St. John and St. Matthew.

A large space of ground about these consecrated edifices is covered with grave-stones, few of which have any inscription. He that surveys it, attended by an insular antiquary, may be told where the kings of many nations are buried, and if he loves to soothe his imagination with the thoughts that naturally arise in places where the great and the powerful lie mingled with the dust, let him listen in submissive silence; for if he asks any questions, his delight is at an end.

**270** Iona has long enjoyed, without any very credible<sup>o</sup> attestation,<sup>o</sup> the honor of being reputed the cemetery of the Scottish kings.<sup>87</sup> It is not unlikely that, when the opinion of local sanctity was prevalent, the chieftains of

<sup>86</sup> "Aye, call it holy ground!"—*Mrs. Hemans*. There is a church in Ohio that is named after one of the ecclesiastics of Iona, *St. Columba*.

<sup>87</sup> *Ross*.—"Where is Duncan's body?"

*Macduff*.—"Carried to Colme-kill (Iona)  
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,  
And guardian of their bones."

—*Macbeth*, Act II, Scene 2.

the isles, and perhaps some of the Norwegian or Irish princes, were repositd in this venerable inclosure. But by whom the subterraneous vaults are peopled is now utterly unknown. The graves are very numerous, and some of them undoubtedly contain the remains of men who did not expect to be so soon forgotten.

**271** There remains a broken building, which is called the Bishop's House, I know not by what authority. It was once the residence of some man above the common rank, for it has two stories and a chimney. We were shown a chimney at the other end, which was only a niche, without perforation,<sup>o</sup> but so much does antiquarian credulity<sup>o</sup> or patriotic vanity prevail, that it was not much more safe to trust the eye of our instructor than the memory.

**272** There is in the island one house more, and only one, that has a chimney; we entered it, and found it neither wanting repair nor inhabitants; but to the farmers, who now possess it, the chimney is of no great value; for their fire was made on the floor, in the middle of the room, and notwithstanding the dignity of their mansion, they rejoiced, like their neighbors, in the comforts of smoke.

**273** We now left those illustrious ruins, by which Mr. Boswell was much affected, nor would I willingly be thought to have looked upon them without some emotion. Perhaps, in the revolutions of the world, Iona may be sometime again the instructress of the western regions.

**274** It was no long voyage to Mull, where, under Sir Allan's protection, we landed in the evening, and were entertained for the night by Mr. Maclean, a minister that lives upon the coast, whose elegance of conversation, and strength of judgment, would make him conspicuous in

places of greater celebrity. Next day we dined with Dr. Maclean, another physician, and then traveled on to the house of a very powerful laird, Maclean of Lochbuy; for in this country every man's name is Maclean.

**275** Where races are thus numerous, and thus combined, none but the chief of a clan is addressed by his name. The distinction of the meaner people is made by their Christian names. In consequence of this practice, the late laird of Macfarlane, an eminent genealogist, considered himself as disrespectfully treated if the common addition was applied to him. Mr. Macfarlane, said he, may with equal propriety be said to many; but I, and I only, am Macfarlane.

**276** Lochbuy has, like the other insular chieftains, quitted the castle that sheltered his ancestors, and lives near it, in a mansion not very spacious or splendid. I have seen no houses in the islands much to be envied for convenience or magnificence, yet they bear testimony to the progress of arts and civility, as they show that rapine and surprise are no longer dreaded, and are much more commodious<sup>o</sup> than the ancient fortresses.

**277** We were now to leave the Hebrides, where we had spent some weeks with sufficient amusement, and where we had amplified<sup>o</sup> our thoughts with new scenes of nature and new modes of life. More time would have given us a more distinct view, but it was necessary that Mr. Boswell should return before the Courts of Justice were opened.

**278** From Lochbuy we rode a very few miles to the side of Mull which faces Scotland, where, having taken leave of our kind protector, Sir Allan, we embarked in a boat in which the seat provided for our accommodation was a

heap of rough brushwood; and on the twenty-second of October reposed at a tolerable inn on the main land.

**279** On the next day we began our journey southwards. The weather was tempestuous. The night came on while we had yet a great part of the way to go, though not so dark but that we could discern the cataracts<sup>88</sup> which poured down the hills on one side, and fell into one general channel that ran with great violence on the other. The wind was loud, the rain was heavy, and the whistling of the blast, the fall of the shower, the rush of the cataracts, and the roar of the torrent, made a nobler chorus of the rough<sup>89</sup> music of nature than it had ever been my chance to hear before.

**280** At last we came to —

#### INVERARAY,

where we found an inn, not only commodious, but magnificent.

**281** The difficulties of peregrination<sup>o</sup> were now at an end. Mr. Boswell had the honor of being known to the Duke of Argyle, by whom we were very kindly entertained at his splendid seat, and supplied with conveniences for surveying his spacious park and rising forests.

**282** After two days' stay at Inveraray we proceeded southward over Glencroe, a black and dreary region, now made easily passable by a military road which rises from either end of the glen by an acclivity<sup>o</sup> not dangerously steep but sufficiently laborious. In the middle, at the top of the hill, is a seat with this inscription,—

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<sup>88</sup> "The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep."

— *Wordsworth.*

<sup>89</sup> "Merciful wind, sing me a hoarse, rough song." — *Byron.*

## REST, AND BE THANKFUL.

Stones were placed to mark the distances, which the inhabitants have taken away, resolved, they said, "to have no new miles."

283 From Glencroe we passed through a pleasant country to the banks of —

## LOCH LOMOND,

and were received at the house of Sir James Colquhoun, who is owner of almost all the thirty islands of the loch, which we went in a boat next morning to survey. The heaviness of the rain shortened our voyage, but we landed on one island planted with yew and stocked with deer, and on another containing perhaps not more than half an acre, remarkable for the ruins of an old castle, on which the osprey <sup>90</sup> builds her annual nest. Had Loch Lomond been in a happier climate, it would have been the boast of wealth and vanity to own one of the little spots which it incloses, and to have employed upon it all the arts of embellishment. But as it is, the islets, which court the gazer at a distance, disgust <sup>91</sup> him at his approach, when he finds, instead of soft lawns and shady thickets, nothing more than uncultivated ruggedness.

284 Where the loch discharges itself into a river called the Leven, we passed a night with Mr. Smollett, a relation of Dr. Smollett, <sup>92</sup> to whose memory he has raised an obelisk on the bank near the house in which he was born. The civility and respect which we found at every place,

<sup>90</sup> fish-hawk.

<sup>91</sup> displease.

<sup>92</sup> An English physician, novelist, and historian, born in 1721, best known by his novels, *Adventures of Roderick Random* and *Expedition of Humphrey Clinker*.



it is ungrateful to omit, and tedious to repeat. Here we were met by a postchaise, that conveyed us to —

## GLASGOW.

**285** From Glasgow we directed our course to Auchinleck, an estate devolved, through a long series of ancestors, to Mr. Boswell's father, the present possessor. In our way we found several places remarkable enough in themselves, but already described by those who viewed them at more leisure, or with much more skill; and stopped two days at Mr. Campbell's, a gentleman married to Mr. Boswell's sister.

## AUCHINLECK,

**286** which signifies a stony field, seems not now to have any particular claim to its denomination. It is a district generally level and sufficiently fertile, but, like all the western side of Scotland, incommoded by very frequent rain. It was, with the rest of the country, generally naked, till the present possessor, finding by the growth of some stately trees near his old castle that the ground was favorable enough to timber, adorned it very diligently with annual plantations.

**287** Lord Auchinleck, who is one of the judges of Scotland, and therefore not wholly at leisure for domestic business or pleasure, has yet found time to make improvements in his patrimony. He has built a house of hewn stone, very stately and durable, and has advanced the value of his lands with great tenderness to his tenants.

**288** I was, however, less delighted with the elegance of the modern mansion than with the sullen dignity of the old castle. I clambered with Mr. Boswell among the

ruins, which afford striking images of ancient life. It is, like other castles, built upon a point of rock, and was I believe anciently surrounded with a moat. There is another rock near it, to which the drawbridge, when it was let down, is said to have reached.

**289** At no great distance from the house runs a pleasing brook, by a red rock, out of which has been hewn a very agreeable and commodious summer-house, at less expense, as Lord Auchinleck told me, than would have been required to build a room of the same dimensions. The rock seems to have no more dampness than any other wall. Such opportunities of variety it is judicious not to neglect.

**290** We now returned to Edinburgh, where I passed some days with men of learning, whose names want no advancement from my commemoration, or with women of elegance, which perhaps disclaims a pedant's praise.

**291** The conversation of the Scots grows every day less unpleasing to the English;<sup>93</sup> their peculiarities wear fast away; their dialect is likely to become in half a century provincial and rustic, even to themselves. The great, the learned, the ambitious, and the vain, all cultivate the English phrase and the English pronunciation, and in splendid companies Scotch is not much heard, except now and then from an old lady.

**292** There is one subject of philosophical curiosity to be found in Edinburgh, which no other city has to show—a College of the Deaf and Dumb, who are taught to speak, to read, to write, and to practice arithmetic, by a gentleman, whose name is Braidwood. The number which

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<sup>93</sup> Did the Doctor inquire whether English grew less unpleasing to the Scots?

attends him is, I think, about twelve, which he brings together into a little school, and instructs according to their several degrees of proficiency.

293 I do not mean to mention the instruction of the deaf as new. Having been first practiced upon the son of a constable<sup>94</sup> of Spain, it was afterward cultivated with much emulation in England, by Wallis and Holder, and was lately professed by Mr. Baker, who once flattered me with hopes of seeing his method published. How far any former teachers have succeeded, it is not easy to know; the improvement of Mr. Braidwood's pupils is wonderful. They not only speak, write, and understand what is written, but if he that speaks looks toward them, and modifies his organs by distinct and full utterance, they know so well what is spoken, that it is an expression scarcely figurative to say they hear with the eye. That any have attained to the power mentioned by Burnet, of feeling sounds, by laying a hand on the speaker's mouth, I know not; but I have seen so much, that I can believe more; a single word, or a short sentence, I think, may possibly be so distinguished.

294 It will readily be supposed by those that consider this subject, that Mr. Braidwood's scholars spell accurately. Orthography is vitiated among such as learn first to speak, and then to write, by imperfect notions of the relation between letters and vocal utterance; but to those students every character is of equal importance; for letters are to them not symbols of names, but of things; when they write they do not represent a sound, but delineate<sup>o</sup> a form.

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<sup>94</sup> Count of the Stable, a very high officer in certain European countries in the Middle Ages.

295 This school I visited, and found some of the scholars waiting for their master, whom they are said to receive at his entrance with smiling countenances and sparkling eyes, delighted with the hope of new ideas. One of the young ladies had her slate before her, on which I wrote a question consisting of three figures, to be multiplied by two figures. She looked upon it, and quivering her fingers in a manner which I thought very pretty, but of which I knew not whether it was art or play, multiplied the sum regularly in two lines, observing the decimal place; but did not add the two lines together, probably disdaining so easy an operation. I pointed at the place where the sum total should stand, and she noted it with such expedition as seemed to show that she had it only to write.

296 It was pleasing to see one of the most desperate of human calamities capable of so much help: whatever enlarges hope will exalt courage; after having seen the deaf taught arithmetic, who would be afraid to cultivate the Hebrides?

297 Such are the things which this journey has given me an opportunity of seeing, and such are the reflections which that sight has raised. Having passed my time almost wholly in cities, I may have been surprised by modes of life and appearances of nature that are familiar to men of wider survey and more varied conversation.<sup>o</sup> Novelty and ignorance must always be reciprocal, and I cannot but be conscious that my thoughts on national manners are the thoughts of one who has seen but little.





SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

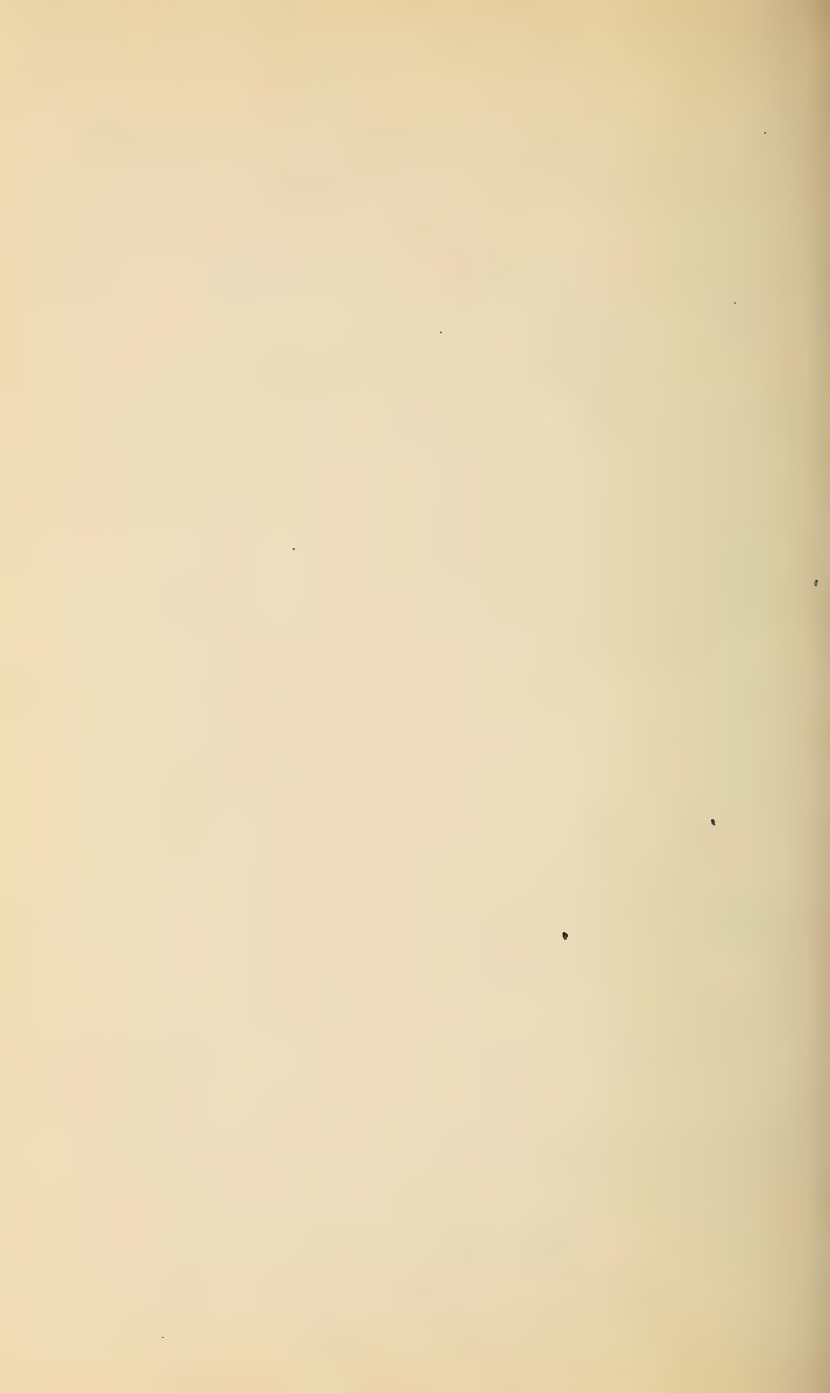


## SAMUEL T. COLERIDGE.

1772-1834.

COLERIDGE, Southey, and Wordsworth are usually thought of as constituting the Lake School. The epithet was given them in a mood of mild derision, but it clung and became a title of honor.

Coleridge wrote much, both prose and poetry. In the first it was mostly theology and criticism. He was one of those great teachers who taught the world the transcendent greatness of Shakespeare. He was the author of several dramas, and the maker of at least one translation of superior merit, *The Death of Wallenstein*. Among his poems are three, that, of a certainty, were not born to die,—*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, *Kubla Khan*, and *Christabel*,—and there are others, different in the subject and style, which rank high. Shelley pronounced the *Ode to France* the finest in the English language. *Fears in Solitude* is a fine supplement to the ode named. Coleridge looked upon the country across the Channel with the eyes of Burke, rather than of Fox. *Dejection — an Ode*, *The Nightingale*, *Love*, and *The Picture* are worthy poems.



# Christabel

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## PREFACE.<sup>1</sup>

THE first part of the following poem was written in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven, at Stowey, in the county of Somerset. The second part, after my return from Germany, in the year one thousand eight hundred, at Keswick, Cumberland. Since the latter date, my poetic powers have been, till very lately, in a state of suspended animation. But as, in my very first conception of the tale, I had the whole present to my mind with the wholeness no less than with the loveliness of a vision, I trust that I shall yet be able to embody in verse the three parts yet to come.<sup>2</sup>

It is probable, that if the poem had been finished at either of the former periods, or if even the first and second part had been finished in the year 1800, the impression of its originality would have been much greater than I dare at present expect. But for this, I have only my own indolence to blame. The dates are mentioned for the exclusive purpose of precluding charges of plagiarism or servile imitation from myself. For there is among us a set of critics who seem to hold that every possible thought and image is traditional; who have no notion that there are such things as fountains in the world, small as well as great; and who would, therefore, charitably derive every rill they behold flowing, from a perforation made in some other man's tank. I am confident, however, that as

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<sup>1</sup> To the edition of 1816.

<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately not done.

far as the present poem is concerned, the celebrated poets whose writings I might be suspected of having imitated, either in particular passages, or in the tone and the spirit of the whole, would be among the first to vindicate me from the charge, and who, on any striking coincidence, would permit me to address them in this doggerel version of two monkish Latin hexameters:—

'Tis mine and it is likewise yours,  
But an if this will not do,  
Let it be mine, good friend! for I  
Am the poorer of the two.

I have only to add, that the meter of the *Christabel* is not, properly speaking, irregular, though it may seem so from its being founded on a new principle, namely, that of counting in each line the accents, not the syllables.<sup>3</sup> Though the latter may vary from seven to twelve, yet in each line the accents will be found to be only four. Nevertheless, this occasional variation in number of syllables is not introduced wantonly, or for the mere ends of convenience, but in correspondence with some transition in the nature of the imagery or passion.

PART THE FIRST.

'Tis the middle of the night by the castle clock,  
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock!  
Tu — whit! — Tu — whoo!  
And hark, again! the crowing cock,  
How drowsily it crew.  
Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,  
Hath a toothless mastiff, which

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<sup>3</sup> Observe this in reading; read aloud.

From her kennel beneath the rock  
Maketh answer to the clock,<sup>4</sup>  
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour ; <sup>10</sup>  
Ever and aye, by shine and shower,  
Sixteen short howls, not over loud :  
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark?  
The night is chilly, but not dark.  
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,  
It covers but not hides the sky.  
The moon is behind, and at the full ;  
And yet she looks both small and dull. 20  
The night is chill, the cloud is gray :  
'Tis a month before the month of May,  
And the spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,  
Whom her father loves so well, 25  
What makes <sup>5</sup> her in the wood so late,  
A furlong from the castle gate?  
She had dreams all yesternight  
Of her own betrothed knight ;  
And she in the midnight wood will pray 30  
For the weal of her lover that's far away.

She stole along, she nothing spoke,  
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,  
And naught was green upon the oak, 35  
But moss and rarest mistletoe :  
She kneels beneath the huge oak tree,  
And in silence prayeth she.

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<sup>4</sup> a chiming clock.

<sup>5</sup> requires her to be.

The lady sprang up suddenly,  
 The lovely lady, Christabel! 40  
 It moaned as near, as near can be,  
 But what it is, she cannot tell.—  
 On the other side it seems to be,  
 Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

The night is chill; the forest bare; 45  
 Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?  
 There is not wind enough in the air  
 To move away the ringlet curl  
 From the lovely lady's cheek —  
 There is not wind enough to twirl 50  
 The one red leaf, the last of its clan,<sup>6</sup>  
 That dances as often as dance it can,  
 Hanging so light, and hanging so high,  
 On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

Hush, beating heart of Christabel! 55  
 Jesu, Maria, shield her well!  
 She folded her arms beneath her cloak,  
 And stole to the other side of the oak.  
 What sees she there?

There she sees a damsel bright, 60  
 Drest in a silken robe of white,  
 That shadowy in the moonlight shone:  
 The neck that made that white robe wan,<sup>7</sup>  
 Her stately neck, and arms were bare;

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<sup>6</sup> "And if I should live to be  
 The last leaf upon the tree  
 In the spring."

— *Holmes*.

<sup>7</sup> "Wan and of a leaden hue." — *Chaucer*.



Her blue-veined feet unsandaled were ; 65  
And wildly glittered here and there  
The gems entangled in her hair.  
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see —  
A lady so richly clad as she —  
Beautiful exceedingly ! 70  
Mary, mother, save me now !  
(Said Christabel), And who art thou ?  
The lady strange made answer meet,  
And her voice was faint and sweet : —  
“ Have pity on my sore distress,  
I scarce can speak for weariness.”  
“ Stretch forth thy hand, and have no fear,”  
Said Christabel, “ How camest thou here ? ”  
And the lady, whose voice was faint and sweet,  
Did thus pursue her answer meet : — 80  
“ My sire is of a noble line,  
And my name is Geraldine :  
Five warriors seized me yesternorn,  
Me, even me, a maid forlorn :  
They choked my cries with force and fright, 85  
And tied me on a palfrey white.  
The palfrey was as fleet as wind,  
And they rode furiously behind,  
They spurred amain,° their steeds were white ;  
And once we crossed the shade of night. 90  
As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,  
I have no thought what men they be ;  
Nor do I know how long it is  
(For I have lain entranced I wis°)  
Since one, the tallest of the five, 95  
Took me from the palfrey's back,

A weary woman, scarce alive.  
Some muttered words his comrades spoke:  
He placed me underneath this oak,  
He swore they would return with haste; 100  
Whither they went I cannot tell —  
I thought I heard, some minutes past,  
Sounds as of a castle bell,  
Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she),  
And help a wretched maid to flee.” 105

Then Christabel stretched forth her hand  
And comforted fair Geraldine:  
“ O well bright dame may you command  
The service of Sir Leoline;  
And gladly our stout chivalry 110  
Will he send forth and friends withal  
To guide and guard you safe and free  
Home to your noble father’s hall.”  
She rose: and forth with steps they passed  
That strove to be, and were not, fast. 115  
Her gracious STARS the lady blest,  
And thus spake on sweet Christabel;  
“ All our household are at rest,  
The hall as silent as the cell,  
Sir Leoline is weak in health 120  
And may not well awakened be,  
But we will move as if in stealth:  
And I beseech your courtesy  
This night, to share your couch with me.”<sup>8</sup>  
They crossed the moat, and Christabel 125  
Took the key that fitted well;

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<sup>8</sup> Christabel speaks as if receiving a courtesy, not conferring one.

A little door she opened straight,  
 All <sup>9</sup> in the middle of the gate;  
 The gate that was ironed within and without,  
 Where an army in battle-array had marched out;<sup>130</sup>  
 The lady sank, belike through pain,  
 And Christabel with might and main  
 Lifted her up, a weary weight,  
 Over the threshold of the gate:  
 Then the lady rose again, 135  
 And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear,  
 They crossed the court: right glad they were.  
 And Christabel devoutly cried  
 To the lady by her side, 140  
 "Praise we the Virgin all divine  
 Who hath rescued thee from thy distress!"  
 "Alas, alas!" said Geraldine,  
 "I cannot speak for weariness."  
 So free from danger, free from fear, 145  
 They crossed the court: right glad they were.

Outside her kennel, the mastiff old  
 Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.<sup>10</sup>  
 The mastiff old did not awake,  
 Yet she an angry moan did make! 150  
 And what can ail the mastiff bitch?  
 Never till now she uttered yell  
 Beneath the eye of Christabel.  
 Perhaps it is the owl's scritch:  
 For what can ail the mastiff bitch?<sup>11</sup> 155

<sup>9</sup> exactly.

<sup>10</sup> "The cold, white moon."—*Byron*.

<sup>11</sup> A hint here of an evil presence; another in line 161.

They passed the hall, that echoes still,  
 Pass as lightly as you will!  
 The brands were flat, the brands were dying,  
 Amid their own white ashes lying;  
 But when the lady passed, there came 160  
 A tongue of light, a fit of flame;  
 And Christabel saw the lady's eye,  
 And nothing else saw she thereby,  
 Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,  
 Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall. 165  
 "O softly tread," said Christabel,  
 "My father seldom sleepeth well."  
 Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,  
 And jealous <sup>12</sup> of the listening air  
 They steal their way from stair to stair, 170  
 Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,  
 And now they pass the Baron's room,  
 As still as death, with stifled breath!  
 And now have reached her chamber door;  
 And now doth Geraldine press <sup>13</sup> down 175  
 The rushes <sup>14</sup> of the chamber floor.  
 The moon shines dim <sup>15</sup> in the open air  
 And not a moonbeam enters here.  
 But they without its light can see  
 The chamber carved so curiously, 180  
 Carved with figures strange and sweet,  
 All made out of the carver's brain,  
 For a lady's chamber meet:

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<sup>12</sup> afraid.

<sup>13</sup> tread

"Our Tarquin then  
 Did softly press the rushes."

— *Cymbeline*, Act I, Scene 2.

<sup>14</sup> Instead of rug or carpet.

<sup>15</sup> There's a "thin gray cloud."

The lamp with twofold silver chain  
Is fastened to an angel's feet. 185  
The silver lamp burns dead and dim;  
But Christabel the lamp will trim.  
She trimmed the lamp, and made it bright,  
And left it swinging to and fro,  
While Geraldine in wretched plight, 190  
Sank down upon the floor below.

"O weary lady, Geraldine,  
I pray you, drink this cordial wine!  
It is a wine of virtuous powers;  
My mother made it of wild flowers." 195

"And will your mother pity me,  
Who am a maiden most forlorn?"  
Christabel answered — "Woe is me!  
She died the hour that I was born.  
I have heard the gray-haired friar tell, 200  
How on her death-bed she did say,  
That she should hear the castle bell  
Strike twelve upon my wedding day.  
O mother dear! that thou wert here!"  
"I would," said Geraldine, "she were." 205

But soon with altered voice, said she —  
"Off, wandering mother! Peak and pine! <sup>16</sup>  
I have power to bid thee flee."  
Alas! what ails poor Geraldine?  
Why stares she with unsettled eye? 210

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<sup>16</sup> "Weary sev'n nights nine times nine  
Shall he dwindle, *peak and pine*."

Geraldine fitly snatches a phrase from the "*First Witch*" in *Macbeth*.

Can she the bodiless dead espy?  
And why with hollow voice cries she,  
“Off, woman, off! this hour is mine —  
Though thou her guardian spirit be,  
Off, woman, off! ’tis given to me.” 215

Then Christabel knelt by the lady’s side,  
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue —  
“Alas!” said she, “this ghastly ride —  
Dear lady! it hath wildered you!”  
The lady wiped her moist cold brow, 220  
And faintly said, “’Tis over now!”

Again the wild-flower wine she drank!  
Her fair large eyes ’gan glitter bright,  
And from the floor whereon she sank,  
The lofty lady stood upright; 225  
She was most beautiful to see,  
Like a lady of a far countrée.

And thus the lofty lady spake —  
“All they who live in the upper sky,  
Do love you, holy Christabel! 230  
And you love them, and for their sake  
And for the good which me befell,  
Even I in my degree will try,<sup>17</sup>  
Fair maiden, to requite you well.  
But now unrobe yourself; for I 235  
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie.”

Quoth Christabel, “So let it be!”  
And as the lady bade, did she.

---

<sup>17</sup> False.



Her gentle limbs did she undress,  
And lay down in her loveliness. 240

But through her brain of weal and woe  
So many thoughts moved to and fro,  
That vain it were her lids to close;  
So half-way from the bed she rose,  
And on her elbow did recline 245  
To look at the lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed,  
And slowly rolled her eyes around;  
Then drawing in her breath aloud,  
Like one that shuddered, she unbound 250  
The cincture from beneath her breast:  
Her silken robe, and inner vest,  
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,  
Behold! her bosom and half her side —  
A sight to dream of, not to tell! <sup>18</sup> 255  
O shield her! shield sweet Christabel!

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs:  
Ah! what a stricken look was hers!  
Deep from within she seems half-way  
To lift some weight with sick assay, <sup>19</sup> 260  
And eyes the maid and seeks delay;  
Then suddenly, as one defied,  
Collects herself in scorn and pride,  
And lay down by the Maiden's side! —  
And in her arms the maid she took, 265  
Ah, wel-a-day!

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<sup>18</sup> Thanks!

<sup>19</sup> faint effort.

And with low voice and doleful look  
 These words did say :  
 " In the touch of this bosom there worketh a spell,  
 Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel! 270  
 Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-morrow  
 This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow ;  
     But vainly thou warrest,<sup>20</sup>  
         For this is alone in 275  
         Thy power to declare,  
         That in the dim forest  
     Thou heardest a low moaning,  
 And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly fair :  
 And didst bring her home with thee in love and in  
         charity,  
 To shield her and shelter her from the damp 280  
         air."

THE CONCLUSION TO PART THE FIRST.

It was a lovely sight to see <sup>21</sup>  
 The lady Christabel, when she  
 Was praying at the old oak tree,  
     Amid the jagged shadows  
     Of mossy leafless boughs, 285  
     Kneeling in the moonlight,  
     To make her gentle vows ;  
 Her slender palms together prest,  
 Heaving sometimes on her breast ;  
 Her face resigned to bliss or bale — 290  
 Her face, oh call it fair, not pale,  
 And both blue eyes more bright than clear,  
 Each about to have a tear.

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<sup>20</sup> tryest.

<sup>21</sup> The poet takes us back to the beginning.

With open eyes <sup>22</sup> (ah woe is me!)  
Asleep, and dreaming fearfully, 295  
Fearfully dreaming, yet I wis,  
Dreaming that alone, which is —  
O sorrow and shame! Can this be she,  
The lady who knelt at the old oak tree?  
And lo! the worker of these harms, 300  
That holds the maiden in her arms,  
Seems to slumber still and mild,  
As a mother with her child.

A star hath set, a star hath risen,  
O Geraldine! since arms of thine 305  
Have been the lovely lady's prison.  
O Geraldine! one hour was thine  
Thou'st had thy will! By tairn and rill,  
The night-birds all that hour were still.<sup>23</sup>  
But now they are jubilant anew, 310  
From cliff and tower, tu — whoo! tu — whoo!  
Tu — whoo! tu — whoo! from wood and fell!

And see! <sup>24</sup> the lady Christabel  
Gathers herself from out her trance;  
Her limbs relax, her countenance 315  
Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin lids  
Close o'er her eyes; and tears she sheds —  
Large tears that leave the lashes bright!  
And oft the while she seems to smile 320  
As infants at a sudden light!  
Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,  
Like a youthful hermitess,

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<sup>22</sup> Narrative continues.

<sup>23</sup> The spirit of evil was abroad.

<sup>24</sup> The "hour" has passed.

Beauteous in a wilderness,  
 Who, praying always, prays in sleep. 325  
 And, if she move unquietly,  
 Perchance 'tis but the blood so free,  
 Comes back and tingles in her feet.  
 No doubt, she hath a vision sweet.  
 What if her guardian spirit 'twere, 330  
 What if she knew her mother near?  
 But this she knows, in joys and woes,  
 That saints will aid if men will call:  
 For the blue sky bends over all!

## PART THE SECOND.

"EACH matin bell," the Baron saith, 335  
 "Knells us back to a world of death."  
 These words Sir Leoline first said,  
 When he rose and found his lady dead:  
 These words Sir Leoline will say,  
 Many a morn to his dying day. 340  
 And hence the custom and law began,  
 That still at dawn the sacristan <sup>25</sup>  
 Who duly pulls the heavy bell,  
 Five and forty beads must tell  
 Between each stroke <sup>26</sup>—a warning knell, 345  
 Which not a soul can choose but hear  
 From Bratha Head to Wyndermere.<sup>27</sup>  
  
 Saith Bracy the bard, "So let it knell!  
 And let the drowsy sacristan  
 Still count as slowly as he can! 350

<sup>25</sup> Sexton.<sup>26</sup> "A palace and a prison on each hand." — *Byron*.

There is no lack of such, I ween  
As well fill up the space between.  
In Langdale Pike and Witch's Lair,<sup>27</sup>  
And Dungeon-ghyll <sup>27</sup> so foully rent,  
With ropes of rock and bells of air 355  
Three sinful sextons' ghosts are pent,  
Who all give back, one after t'other,  
The death-note to their living brother;  
And oft too, by the knell offended,  
Just as their one! two! three! is ended, 360  
The devil mocks the doleful tale  
With a merry peal from Borrow-dale."

The air is still! through mist and cloud  
That merry peal comes ringing loud;  
And Geraldine shakes off her dread, 365  
And rises lightly from the bed;  
Puts on her silken vestments white,  
And tricks <sup>28</sup> her hair in lovely plight,  
And nothing doubting of her spell,  
Awakens the lady Christabel. 370  
"Sleep you, sweet lady Christabel?  
I trust that you have rested well."

And Christabel awoke and spied  
The same who lay down by her side —  
O rather say, the same whom she 375  
Raised up beneath the old oak tree!  
Nay, fairer yet! and yet more fair!  
For she belike hath drunken deep

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<sup>27</sup> The geography of this poem is not *material*.

<sup>28</sup> adorns, dresses. "And tricks his beams."—*Lycidas*, line 170.

Of all the blessedness of sleep!  
And while she spake, her looks, her air 380  
Such gentle thankfulness declare,  
That (so it seemed) her girded vests  
Grew tight beneath her heaving breasts.  
"Sure I have sinned!" <sup>29</sup> said Christabel,  
"Now heaven be praised if all be well!" 385  
And in low faltering tones, yet sweet,  
Did she the lofty lady greet  
With such perplexity of mind  
As dreams too lively leavē behind.

So quickly she rose, and quickly arrayed 390  
Her maiden limbs, and having prayed  
That He who on the cross did groan  
Might wash away her sins unknown,  
She forthwith led fair Geraldine  
To meet her sire, Sir Leoline. 395  
The lovely maid and the lady tall  
Are pacing both into the hall,  
And pacing on through page and groom,  
Enter the Baron's presence room.  
The Baron rose, and while he prest 400  
His gentle daughter to his breast,  
With cheerful wonder in his eyes  
The lady Geraldine espies,  
And gave such welcome to the same,  
As might beseem so bright a dame! 405  
But when he heard the lady's tale,  
And when she told her father's name,

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<sup>29</sup> Self-reproach.



Why waxed Sir Leoline so pale,  
Murmuring o'er the name again,  
Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine? 410

Alas! they had been friends in youth; <sup>30</sup>  
But whispering tongues can poison truth;  
And constancy lives in realms above;  
And life is thorny; and youth is vain;  
And to be wroth with one we love, 415  
Doth work like madness in the brain.  
And thus it chanced, as I divine,  
With Roland and Sir Leoline.  
Each spake words of high disdain  
And insult to his heart's best brother: 420  
They parted — ne'er to meet again!  
But never either found another  
To free the hollow heart from paining —  
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,  
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder; 425  
A dreary sea now flows between,  
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,  
Shall wholly do away, I ween,  
The marks of that which once hath been.

Sir Leoline, a moment's space, 430  
Stood gazing on the damsel's face;  
And the youthful Lord of Tryermaine  
Came back upon his heart again.

O then the Baron forgot his age,  
His noble heart swelled high with rage; 435

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<sup>30</sup> The next twenty lines are a passage seldom surpassed in truth and beauty.

He swore by the wounds in Jesu's side,  
He would proclaim it far and wide  
With trump and solemn heraldry,  
That they, who thus had wronged the dame,  
Were base as spotted infamy! 440  
"And if they dare deny the same,  
My herald shall appoint a week,  
And let the recreant traitors seek  
My tourney court — that there and then  
I may dislodge their reptile souls 445  
From the bodies of and forms of men!"  
He spake: his eye in lightning rolls!  
For the lady was ruthlessly seized;<sup>31</sup> and he kenned  
In the beautiful lady the child of his friend!

And now the tears were on his face, 450  
And fondly in his arms he took  
Fair Geraldine, who met the embrace,  
Prolonging it with joyous look,  
Which when she viewed, a vision fell  
Upon the soul of Christabel, 455  
The vision of fear, the touch and pain!  
She shrunk and shuddered, and saw again  
(Ah, woe is me! Was it for thee,  
Thou gentle maid; such sights to see?)

Again she saw that bosom old, 460  
Again she felt that bosom cold,  
And drew in her breath with a hissing sound:  
Whereat the Knight turned wildly round,  
And nothing saw, but his own sweet maid  
With eyes upraised, as one that prayed. 465

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<sup>31</sup> So he believed.

The touch, the sight, had passed away,  
 And in its stead that vision blest,  
 Which comforted her after-rest,  
 While in the lady's arms she lay,  
 Had put a rapture in her breast,  
 And on her lips and o'er her eyes,  
 Spread smiles like light!

With new surprise,  
 "What ails then my beloved child?"  
 The Baron said — His daughter mild  
 Made answer, "All will yet be well!" 475  
 I ween she had no power to tell  
 Aught else: so mighty was the spell.  
 Yet he,<sup>32</sup> who saw this Geraldine,  
 Had deemed her sure a thing divine,  
 Such sorrow with such grace she blended, 480  
 As if she feared she had offended  
 Sweet Christabel, that gentle maid!  
 And with such lowly tones she prayed,  
 She might be sent without delay  
 Home to her father's mansion. 485

"Nay!  
 Nay, by my soul!" said Leoline.  
 "Ho! Bracy the bard, the charge be thine!  
 Go thou, with music sweet and loud,  
 And take two steeds with trappings proud,  
 And take the youth whom thou lov'st best, 490  
 To bear thy harp, and learn thy song,  
 And clothe you both in solemn vest,  
 And over the mountains haste along,  
 Lest wandering folk, that are abroad,  
 Detain you on the valley road. 495

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<sup>32</sup> Any one who saw would have deemed.

And when he <sup>33</sup> hath crossed the Irthing flood,  
 My merry bard! he hastes, he hastes  
 Up Knorren Moor, through Halegarth Wood,  
 And reaches soon that castle good  
 Which stands and threatens Scotland's wastes. 500

"Bard Bracy! bard Bracy! your horses are fleet,  
 You must ride up the hall, your music so sweet,  
 More loud than your horses' echoing feet!  
 And loud and loud to Lord Roland call,  
 Thy daughter is safe in Langdale hall! 505  
 Thy beautiful daughter is safe and free —  
 Sir Leoline greets thee thus through me.  
 He bids thee come without delay,  
 With all thy numerous array,  
 And take thy lovely daughter home: 510  
 And he will meet thee on the way  
 With all his numerous array  
 White with their panting palfreys' foam,  
 And, by my honor! I will say,  
 That I repent me of the day, 515  
 When I spake words of fierce disdain  
 To Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine! —  
 For since that evil hour hath flown,  
 Many a summer's sun have shone;  
 Yet ne'er found I a friend again 520  
 Like Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine."

The lady fell, and clasped his knees,  
 Her face upraised, her eyes o'erflowing;  
 And Bracy replied with faltering voice,

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<sup>33</sup> Changes from second person to third; he sees Bracy already far on his way.

His gracious hail on all bestowing:— 525  
“Thy words, thou sire of Christabel,  
Are sweeter than my harp can tell,  
Yet might I gain a boon of thee,  
This day my journey should not be;  
So strange a dream hath come to me: 530  
That I vowed with music loud  
To clear yon wood from thing unblest,  
Warned by a vision in my rest!  
For in my sleep I saw that dove,  
That gentle bird whom thou dost love, 535  
And call’st by thy own daughter’s name—  
Sir Leoline! I saw the same  
Fluttering, and uttering fearful moan,  
Among the green herbs in the forest alone.  
Which when I saw and when I heard, 540  
I wondered what might ail the bird:  
For nothing near it could I see,  
Save the grass and green herbs underneath the  
old tree.

“And in my dream, methought, I went  
To search out what might there be found: 545  
And what the sweet bird’s trouble meant,  
That thus lay fluttering on the ground.  
I went and peered, and could descry  
No cause for her distressful cry;  
But yet for her dear lady’s sake 550  
I stooped, methought, the dove to take,  
When lo! I saw a bright green snake  
Coiled around its wings and neck.  
Green as the herbs on which it couched,

Close by the dove its head it crouched; 555  
 And with the dove it heaves and stirs,  
 Swelling its neck as she swelled hers! <sup>34</sup>  
 I awoke; it was the midnight hour,  
 The clock was echoing in the tower;  
 But though my slumber was gone by, 560  
 This dream it would not pass away —  
 It seems to live upon my eye! <sup>35</sup>  
 And thence I vowed this selfsame day,  
 With music strong and saintly song  
 To wander through the forest bare 565  
 Lest aught unholy loiter there."

Thus Bracy said: the Baron, the while,  
 Half-listening heard him with a smile;  
 Then turned to Lady Geraldine,  
 His eyes made up of wonder and love; 570  
 And said in courtly accents fine,  
 "Sweet maid, Lord Roland's beauteous dove,  
 With arms more strong than harp or song,  
 Thy sire and I will crush the snake!"  
 He kissed her forehead as he spake, 575  
 And Geraldine in maiden wise, <sup>36</sup>  
 Casting down her large bright eyes,  
 With blushing cheek and courtesy fine  
 She turned her from Sir Leoline;  
 Softly gathering up her train, 580  
 That o'er her bright arm fell again;  
 And folded her arms across her chest,  
 And couched her head upon her breast,

<sup>34</sup> As the snake was to the dove, so was Geraldine to Christabel.

<sup>35</sup> I see it always.

<sup>36</sup> fashion.



And looked askance <sup>37</sup> at Christabel —  
Jesu, Maria, shield her well! 585

A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy,  
And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her head,  
Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye,  
And with somewhat of malice, and more of dread  
At Christabel she looked askance! — 590  
One moment — and the sight was fled!  
But Christabel in dizzy trance, <sup>38</sup>  
Stumbling on the unsteady ground —  
Shuddered aloud with a hissing sound;  
And Geraldine again turned round, 595  
And like a thing, that sought relief,  
Full of wonder and full of grief,  
She rolled her large bright eyes divine  
Wildly on Sir Leoline.

The maid, alas! her thoughts are gone, 600  
She nothing sees — no sight but one!  
The maid, devoid of guile and sin,  
I know <sup>39</sup> not now, in fearful wise  
So deeply had she drunken in  
That look, those shrunken serpent eyes, 605  
That all her features were resigned  
To this sole image in her mind:  
And passively did imitate  
That look of dull and treacherous hate,  
And thus she stood, in dizzy trance, <sup>40</sup> 610

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<sup>37</sup> That her father might not see.

<sup>38</sup> Effect of that horrid face-making.

<sup>39</sup> recognize.

<sup>40</sup> She wore that snaky face.

Still picturing that look askance,  
 With forced unconscious sympathy  
 Full before her father's view —  
 As far as such a look could be,  
 In eyes so innocent and blue! 615  
 And when the trance was o'er, the maid  
 Paused awhile and inly <sup>41</sup> prayed,  
 Then falling at her father's feet,  
 "By my mother's soul do I entreat,  
 That thou, this woman send away!" 620  
 She said, and more she could not say,  
 For what she knew she could not tell,  
 O'er-mastered by the mighty spell.

Why is thy cheek so wan and wild,  
 Sir Leoline? Thy only child 625  
 Lies at thy feet, thy joy, thy pride,  
 So fair, so innocent, so mild;  
 The same, for whom thy lady died!  
 O by the pangs of her dead mother  
 Think thou no evil of thy child! 630  
 For her, and thee, and for no other,  
 She prayed the moment ere she died:  
 Prayed that the babe for whom she died,  
 Might prove her dear lord's joy and pride!  
 That prayer her deadly pangs beguiled, 635  
<sup>42</sup> Sir Leoline!  
 And would'st thou wrong thy only child,  
<sup>42</sup> Her child and thine?

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<sup>41</sup> "And over all a blacke stole (robe) shee did throw,  
 As one that inly mourned."

— *The Faerie Queene, Canto I, Stanza 4.*

<sup>42</sup> Accent every syllable.

Within the Baron's heart and brain  
 If thoughts like these had any share, 640  
 They only swelled his rage and pain,  
 And did but work confusion there.  
 His heart was cleft with pain and rage,  
 His cheeks they quivered, his eyes were wild,  
 Dishonored thus in his old age; 645  
 Dishonored by his only child,  
 And all his hospitality  
 To th' insulted daughter of his friend,  
 By more than woman's jealousy,  
 Brought thus to a disgraceful end — 650  
 He rolled his eye with stern regard  
 Upon the gentle minstrel bard,  
 And said in tones abrupt, austere —  
 Why, Bracy! dost thou loiter here?  
 I bade thee hence! the bard obeyed; 655  
 And turning from his own sweet maid,  
 The aged knight, Sir Leoline,  
 Led forth the lady Geraldine!

THE CONCLUSION <sup>43</sup> TO PART THE SECOND.

A little child, a limber elf,  
 Singing, dancing to itself, 660  
 A fairy thing with red round cheeks  
 That always finds and never seeks,

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<sup>43</sup> This conclusion first appeared in a letter to Southey. It was placed by the author as a conclusion to "Part the Second" in the edition of 1816. The editor of Coleridge's letters fails to see any relation between the conclusion and the poem. No harm can come from trying to find one.

Makes such a vision to the sight  
As fills a father's eyes with light;  
And pleasures flow in so thick and fast . . . 665  
Upon his heart, that he at last  
Must needs express his love's excess  
With words of unmeant bitterness.  
Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together  
Thoughts so unlike each other; 670  
To mutter and mock a broken charm,  
To dally with wrong that does no harm.  
Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty  
At each wild word to feel within  
A sweet recoil of love and pity. 675  
And what if in a world of sin  
(O sorrow and shame should this be true!)  
Such giddiness of heart and brain  
Comes seldom save from rage and pain,  
So talks as it's most used to do. 680

# The Picture

OR THE LOVER'S RESOLUTION.

*S. T. Coleridge.*

THROUGH weeds, and thorns, and matted underwood,  
I force my way; now climb, and now descend  
O'er rocks, or <sup>1</sup> bare or mossy, with wild foot  
Crushing the purple whorts; <sup>2</sup> while, oft unseen,  
Hurrying along the drifted forest-leaves, 5  
The scared snake rustles. Onward still I toil  
I know not, ask not whither! A new joy,  
Lovely as light, sudden as summer gust,  
And gladsome as the first-born <sup>2a</sup> of the spring,  
Beckons me on, or follows from behind, 10  
Playmate, or guide! The master-passion <sup>3</sup> quelled,  
I feel that I am free. With dun-red bark  
The fir-trees, and the unfrequent slender oak,  
Forth from this tangle wild of bush and brake  
Soar up, and from a melancholy <sup>4</sup> vault 15  
High o'er me, murmuring like a distant sea.

Here Wisdom might resort, and here Remorse;  
Here too the love-lorn man, who, sick in soul,  
And of this busy human heart aweary,

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<sup>1</sup> either

<sup>2</sup> whortleberry.

<sup>2a</sup> earliest flowers.

<sup>3</sup> love.

<sup>4</sup> Coleridge is scarcely consistent. In *To a Friend* he wrote:—

“On a bleak rock, midway the Aonian mount,  
There stands a lone and melancholy tree.”

In *The Nightingale*,—

“In Nature there is nothing melancholy.”

Worships the spirit of unconscious life 20  
 In tree or wild-flower.— Gentle lunatic!  
 If so he might not wholly cease to be,  
 He would far rather not be that, he is;  
 But would be something, that he knows not of,  
 In winds or waters, or among the rocks! 25

But hence, fond wretch!<sup>5</sup> breathe not contagion here;  
 No myrtle walks<sup>6</sup> are these: these are no groves  
 Where Love dare loiter! If in sullen mood  
 He should stray hither, the low stumps shall gore  
 His dainty feet, the briar and the thorn 30  
 Make his plumes haggard.<sup>7</sup> Like a wounded bird  
 Easily caught, ensnare him, O ye Nymphs,  
 Ye Oreads chaste, ye dusky Dryades!  
 And you, ye earth-winds! you that make at morn,  
 The dew drops quiver on the spiders' webs! 35

This is my hour of triumph! I can now  
 With my own fancies play the merry fool,<sup>8</sup>  
 And laugh away worse folly, being free.  
 Here will I seat myself, beside this old,  
 Hollow, and weedy oak, which ivy-twine 40  
 Clothes as with net-work: here will I couch my limbs,  
 Close by this river, in this silent shade,  
 As safe and sacred from the step of man  
 As an invisible world — unheard, unseen,  
 And listening only to the pebbly brook 45

<sup>5</sup> foolish lover.

<sup>6</sup> The myrtle was sacred to Venus.

<sup>7</sup> ruffled.

<sup>8</sup>

“ Let me play the fool!

With sport and laughter let old wrinkles come!”

— *The Merchant.*



That murmurs with a dead,<sup>9</sup> yet tinkling<sup>10</sup> sound;  
 Or to the bees, that in the neighboring trunk  
 Make honey-hoards. The breeze that visits me  
 Was never Love's accomplice, never raised  
 The tendril ringlets from the maiden's brow, 50  
 And the blue, delicate veins above her cheek  
 Ne'er played the wanton — never half-disclosed  
 The maiden's snowy bosom, scattering thence  
 Eye-poisons for some love-distempered youth,  
 Who ne'er henceforth may see an aspen-grove 55  
 Shiver in sunshine, but his feeble heart  
 Shall flow away like a dissolving thing.

Sweet breeze! thou only, if I guess aright,  
 Lifest the feathers of the robin's<sup>11</sup> breast,  
 That swells its little breast, so full of song 60  
 Singing above me, on the mountain-ash.  
 And thou too, desert stream! no pool of thine,  
 Though clear as lake, in latest summer-eve,  
 Did e'er reflect the stately virgin's robe,  
 The face, the form divine, the downcast look 65  
 Contemplative!<sup>12</sup> Behold; her open palm  
 Presses her cheek and brow! her elbow rests  
 On the bare branch of half up-rooted tree,  
 That leans towards<sup>13</sup> its mirror! Who<sup>14</sup> erewhile  
 Had from her countenance turned, or looked by stealth 70  
 (For fear is true love's cruel nurse), he now,  
 With steadfast gaze and unoffending eye,

<sup>9</sup> <sup>10</sup> a contradiction?

<sup>11</sup> The English robin, not our bird of that name.

<sup>12</sup> Accent the antepenult.

<sup>13</sup> Pronounce in two syllables, accenting the last,

<sup>14</sup> Antecedent in line 71.

Worships the watery <sup>15</sup> idol, dreaming hopes  
 Delicious to the soul, but fleeting, vain,  
 E'en as that phantom world on which he gazed, 75  
 But not unheeded gazed: for see, ah! see,  
 The sportive tyrant with her left hand plucks  
 The heads of tall flowers that behind her grow,  
 Lychnis, and willow-herb, and foxglove bells:  
 And suddenly, as one that toys with time, 80  
 Scatters them on the pool! Then all the charm  
 Is broken — all that phantom-world so fair  
 Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,  
 And each mis-shapes the other. Stay awhile,  
 Poor youth, who scarcely dar'st lift up thine eyes, 85  
 The stream will soon renew its smoothness, soon  
 The visions will return! And lo! he stays: <sup>16</sup>  
 And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms  
 Come trembling back, unite, and now once more  
 The pool becomes a mirror; and behold 90  
 Each wild-flower <sup>17</sup> on the marge inverted there,  
 And there the half-uprooted tree — but where,  
 O where the virgin's snowy arm, that leaned  
 On its bare branch? He turns, and she is gone!  
 Homeward she steals through many a woodland maze 95  
 Which he shall seek in vain. Ill-fated youth!  
 Go, day by day, and waste thy manly prime  
 In mad love-yearning by the vacant brook,  
 Till sickly thoughts bewitch thine eyes, and thou  
 Behold'st her shadow still abiding there, 100  
 The Naiad of the mirror!

<sup>15</sup> Her reflection in the water.

<sup>16</sup> His "hour of triumph" seemed over.

<sup>17</sup> "And asters by the brookside  
 Make asters in the brook."

Not to thee,

O wild and desert stream! belongs this tale:  
Gloomy and dark art thou — the crowded firs  
Spire from thy shores, and stretch across thy bed,  
Making thee doleful as a cavern-well: 105  
Save when the shy king-fishers <sup>18</sup> build their nest  
On thy steep banks, no loves hast thou, wild stream!

This be my chosen haunt — emancipate  
From passion's dreams, a freeman, and alone,  
I rise and trace its devious course. O lead, 110  
Lead me to deeper shades and lonelier glooms.  
Lo! stealing through the canopy of firs,  
How fair the sunshine spots that mossy rock,  
Isle of the river, whose disparted waves  
Dart off asunder with an angry sound, 115  
How soon to re-unite! And see! they meet,<sup>19</sup>  
Each in the other lost and found: and see  
Placeless, as spirits, one soft-water sun  
Throbbing within them, heart at once and eye!  
With its soft neighborhood of filmy clouds, 120  
The stains and shadings of forgotten tears,  
Dimness o'erswum with luster! Such the hour  
Of deep enjoyment, following love's brief feuds;  
And hark, the noise of a near waterfall!  
I pass forth into light — I find myself 125  
Beneath a weeping birch (most beautiful  
Of forest-trees, the lady <sup>20</sup> of the woods),  
Hard by the brink of a tall weedy rock  
That overbrows the cataract. How bursts

<sup>18</sup> Live in holes in the bank, ready dug.

<sup>19</sup> Note the metaphor.

<sup>20</sup> "Most shy and lady-like of trees."—*Lowell*.

The landscape on my sight! Two crescent hills 130  
 Fold in behind each other, and so make  
 A circular vale, and land-locked, as might seem,  
 With brook and bridge, and gray stone cottages,  
 Half hid by rocks and fruit-trees. At my feet,  
 The whortleberries are bedewed with spray, 135  
 Dashed upwards by the furious waterfall.  
 How solemnly the pendent ivy-mass  
 Swings in its winnow; <sup>21</sup> all the air is calm.  
 The smoke from cottage chimneys, tinged with light,  
 Rises in columns; from this house alone, 140  
 Close by the waterfall, the column slants,  
 And feels its ceaseless breeze. But what is this? <sup>22</sup>  
 That cottage, with its slanting chimney-smoke,  
 And close beside its porch a sleeping child,  
 His dear head pillowed on a sleeping dog — 145  
 One arm between its forelegs, and the hand  
 Holds loosely its small handful of wild flowers,  
 Unfilleted, and of unequal lengths.  
 A curious picture, with a master's haste  
 Sketched on a strip of pinky-silver skin, 150  
 Peeled from the birchen bark! Divinest maid!  
 Yon bark her canvas, and those purple berries  
 Her pencil! See, the juice is scarcely dried  
 On the fine skin! She has been newly here;  
 And lo! yon patch of heath, has been her couch — 155  
 The pressure still remains! O blessed couch!  
 For this mayst thou flower early, and the sun,  
 Slanting at eve, rest bright, and linger long  
 Upon thy purple bells! O Isabel! <sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> a pendent streamer moving in the wind.

<sup>22</sup> "A curious picture," line 149.

<sup>23</sup> The artist who had painted "the picture," and then taken herself away; but from the signs, "*se cupit ante videri.*"

Daughter of genius! stateliest of our maids! 160  
More beautiful than whom Alcæus <sup>24</sup> wooed,  
The Lesbian woman <sup>25</sup> of immortal song!  
O child of genius! stately, beautiful,  
And full of love to all, save only me,  
And not ungentle e'en to me! My heart, 165  
Why beats it thus? Through yonder coppice-wood  
Needs must the pathway turn, that leads straightway  
On to her father's house. She is alone!  
The night draws on — such ways are hard to hit <sup>26</sup> —  
And fit it is I should restore this sketch, 170  
Dropt unawares no doubt. Why should I yearn  
To keep the relique? 'twill but idly feed  
The passion that consumes me. Let me haste!  
The picture in my hand which she has left;  
She cannot blame me that I followed her: 175  
And I may be her guide the long wood through.

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<sup>24</sup> A lyric poet of Greece.

<sup>25</sup> Sappho. "Where burning Sappho loved and sung."—*Byron*.

<sup>26</sup> Such paths are hard to follow.



CHARLES JAMES FOX



## CHARLES JAMES FOX.

1749-1806.

IN one of Macaulay's fascinating biographical essays, *The Late Lord Holland*,—the writer says: "During more than a century, there has never been a time at which a Fox has not stood in a prominent station among public men. Scarcely had the checkered career of the first Lord Holland (Henry Fox) closed, when his son, Charles, rose to the head of the Opposition, and to the first rank among English debaters."

This son, not being the eldest son, did not inherit the title and had no need of it. The reader of English history during the intense years of the American and the French revolutions must conclude that Charles James Fox was one of the most wonderful men that ever played a part on the stage of the world's great theater.

He spent the years of his manhood in the English Parliament, and at different crises was a cabinet minister. His portrait as an orator, or debater, is painted in the following extracts:—

"Never in my life did I hear anything equal to Fox's speeches *in reply*—they were wonderful."—*Samuel Rogers*.

"Pitt I never heard: Fox but once, and then he struck me as a debater, which to me seems as different from an orator as an improvisatore from a poet."—*Byron*.

"When he got fairly into his subject, was heartily warmed with it, he poured forth words and periods of

fire that smote you, and deprived you of all power to reflect and rescue yourself, whilst he went on to seize the faculties of the listener, and carry them captive along with him withersoever he pleased to rush." — *Edinburgh Review*, 1834.

"It mattered very much indeed that on the transcendent decision whether America was to be enslaved or pacified, Fox should have nothing to unsay. He came to the great argument fresh and unhampered, his mind and body full of elasticity and strength. Without misgiving, without flagging, and with small thought of self, he devoted an eloquence already mature, and an intellect daily and visibly ripening to a cause which more than any one else he contributed to make intelligible, attractive, and at length irresistible." — *Trevelyan's The American Revolution*.

Fox's power as a statesman, as a leader of men, is attested by such judges as the following. Continuing the above characterization, and closing a chapter, the first in the book, entitled *Charles James Fox*, Trevelyan wrote: "That cause at its commencement found him with a broken career. Its triumph placed him in the position of the first subject, and even (considering that his principal antagonist had been the king himself) of the first man in the country."

"Fox is a most extraordinary man: here is a man who has divided the kingdom with Cæsar; so that it was a doubt whether the nation should be ruled by the scepter of George the Third or the tongue of Fox." — *Dr. Johnson*.

"It may be said once for all that Fox was the most transcendent of all debaters, the most genial of all asso-

ciates, the most beloved of all friends. He was moreover, after Burke, the most lettered politician in a generation that affected literature.

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“His nature, apt to extremes, was driven with an excessive reaction to the most violent negative of what he disapproved. We see the same excess to a still greater degree in his still greater master Burke. It is this force of extremes that makes orators.

\* \* \*

“The mastering passion of Fox’s mature life was the love of liberty: it is this which made him take a vigorous, occasionally an intemperate, part against every man or measure in which he could trace the taint or tendency to oppression; it is this which sometimes made him write and speak with unworthy bitterness: but it is this which gave him moral power, which has neutralized the errors of his political career, which makes his faults forgotten and his memory sweet.”—*Rosebery’s Pitt*.

The name of Fox will always bring before the reader’s consciousness that of Pitt and of Burke, “the wondrous three whose words were sparks of immortality;” as in another great parliament, the name of Webster suggests Clay and Calhoun. In neither instance were the three giants always found upon one side. Probably no specimen of forensic eloquence is more familiar to “every schoolboy” than Chatham’s—the elder Pitt’s—appeals for the rights of America, and we associate these with Burke’s potent speeches on *American Taxation* and on *Conciliation with America*.

One would not think that this strange genius whose early life affords a justification for the part he is made

to play in recent historical romance, this glowing impetuous orator would ever seat himself to the quiet, deliberate task of writing history, or that, if he so did, it would be *A History of the Early Part of the Reign of James the Second*. But the book is on our shelves, and in his choice of words the author was careful to use none not found in Dryden. Macaulay, in his essay on *Mackintosh's History of the Revolution in England, in 1688*, speaks slightly of Fox's extreme attention to the niceties of language. He plainly does not think the orator's style best for the historian, but he says: "We at once recognize that consummate master of the whole art of intellectual gladiatorship."

# Charles James Fox

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*Speech in the Debate in Parliament on the French Overtures<sup>1</sup> for Peace, February 3, 1800.*

I MR. SPEAKER,—At so late an hour of the night I am sure you will do me the justice to believe that I do not mean to go at length into the discussion of this great question. Exhausted as the attention of the House must be, and unaccustomed as I have been of late to attend in my place, nothing but a deep sense of my duty could have induced me to trouble you at all, and particularly to request your indulgence at such an hour. Sir, my honorable and learned friend has truly said that the present is a new era in the war. The right honorable, the Chancellor<sup>2</sup> of the Exchequer, feels the justice of the remark; for by traveling back to the commencement of the war, and referring to all the topics and arguments which he has so often and so successfully urged to the House, and by which he has drawn them on to the support of his measures, he is forced to acknowledge that, at the end of a seven years' conflict, we are come but to a new era in the war, at which he thinks it necessary only to press all his former arguments to induce us to persevere. All the topics which have so often misled us — all the reasoning which has so invariably failed — all the lofty predictions which have so constantly been falsified by events — all

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<sup>1</sup> Bonaparte had just been made First Consul, and directly to King George made these overtures.

<sup>2</sup> William Pitt.

the hopes which have amused the sanguine, and all the assurances of the distress and weakness of the enemy which have satisfied the unthinking, are again enumerated and advanced as arguments for our continuing the war. What! at the end of seven years of the most burdensome and the most calamitous struggle that this country was ever engaged in, are we again to be amused with notions of finance and calculations of the exhausted resources of the enemy as a ground of confidence and of hope? Gracious God! Were we not told, five years ago, that France was not only on the brink, but that she was actually in the gulf of bankruptcy? Were we not told, as an unanswerable argument against treating, that she could not hold out another campaign — that nothing but peace could save her — that she wanted only time to recruit her exhausted finances — that to grant her repose was to grant her the means of again molesting this country, and that we had nothing to do but persevere for a short time, in order to save ourselves forever from the consequences of her ambition and her Jacobinism?<sup>3</sup> What! after having gone on from year to year upon assurances like these, and after having seen the repeated refutations of every prediction, are we again to be seriously told that we have the same prospect of success on the same identical grounds? And without any other argument or security, are we invited, at this new era of the war, to carry it on upon principles which, if adopted, may make it eternal? If the right honorable gentleman shall succeed in prevailing on Parliament and

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<sup>3</sup> Jacobus, James. Those Englishmen who adhered to James II. after his expulsion were termed *Jacobites*. In France violent and factious opposition to existing government took, or was given, the name of *Jacobinism*.



the country to adopt the principles which he has advanced this night, I see no possible termination to the contest. No man can see an end to it; and upon the assurances and predictions which have so uniformly failed, are we called upon, not merely to refuse all negotiation, but to countenance principles and views as distant from wisdom and justice as they are in their nature wild and impracticable.

2 I must lament, Sir, in common with every friend of peace, the harsh and unconciliating language which ministers have held toward the French, and which they have even made use of in their answer to a respectful offer of negotiation. Such language has ever been considered as extremely unwise, and has ever been reprobated by diplomatic men. I remember with pleasure the terms in which Lord Malmsbury<sup>4</sup> at Paris, in the year 1796, replied to expressions of this sort used by M. de la Croix. He justly said, "that offensive and injurious insinuations were only calculated to throw new obstacles in the way of accommodation, and that it was not by revolting reproaches, nor by reciprocal invective,<sup>o</sup> that a sincere wish to accomplish the great work of pacification could be evinced." Nothing could be more proper nor more wise than this language; and such ought ever to be the tone and conduct of men entrusted with the very important task of treating with an hostile nation. Being a sincere friend to peace, I must say with Lord Malmes-

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<sup>4</sup> Pitt made repeated overtures for peace. "In October, 1796, Lord Malmsbury, a diplomatist of the highest distinction, was sent to Paris. But as had happened in March, the envoy's instructions to insist on the evacuation of the Netherlands by France rendered negotiation fruitless. On the 19th of December he was ordered to leave France within forty-eight hours."—*Rosebery's Pitt*.

bury, that it is not by reproaches and by invective that we can hope for a reconciliation; and I am convinced in my own mind that I speak the sense of this House, and of a majority of the people of this country, when I lament that any unnecessary recriminations<sup>o</sup> should be flung out by which obstacles are put in the way of pacification. I believe that it is the prevailing sentiment of the people that we ought to abstain from harsh and insulting language; and in common with them I must lament that both in the papers of Lord Grenville, and in the speeches of this night, such license has been given to the invective and reproach. For the same reason I must lament that the right honorable gentleman has thought proper to go at such length, and with such severity of minute investigation, into all the early circumstances of the war, which, whatever they were, are nothing to the present purpose, and ought not to influence the present feelings of the House.

3 I certainly shall not follow him into all the minute detail, though I do not agree with him in many of his assertions. I do not know what impression his narrative may make on other gentlemen; but I will tell him, fairly and candidly, he has not convinced me. I continue to think, and until I see better grounds for changing my opinion than any that the right honorable gentleman has this night produced, I shall continue to think and to say, plainly and explicitly, that this country was the aggressor in the war. But with regard to Austria and Prussia—is there a man who for one moment can dispute that they were the aggressors?

4 Let us suppose the case to be that of Great Britain. Will any gentleman say, if two of the great powers

should make a public declaration that they were determined to make an attack on this kingdom as soon as circumstances should favor their intention; that they only waited for this occasion; and that in the meantime they would keep their forces ready for the purpose; that it would not be considered by the parliament and people of this country as an hostile aggression? And is there an Englishman in existence who is such a friend to peace as to say that the nation could retain its honor and dignity if it should sit down under such a menace? I know too well what is due to the national character of England to believe that there would be two opinions on the case, if thus put home to our own feelings and understanding. We must, then, respect in others the indignation which such an act would excite in ourselves; and when we see it established on the most indisputable testimony, that both at Pilnitz<sup>5</sup> and at Mantua declarations were made to this effect, it is idle to say that, as far as the Emperor and the king of Prussia were concerned, that they were not the aggressors in the war.

5 "Oh! but the decree of the 19th of November, 1792!"<sup>6</sup> that, at least," the right honorable gentleman says, "you must allow to be an act of aggression, not only against England, but against all the sovereigns of Europe." I

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<sup>5</sup> In August, 1791, the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Austria concluded a treaty at Pilnitz, and issued a declaration to the effect that the cause of Louis XVI. was conditionally made the cause of all the monarchs of Europe.

<sup>6</sup> Upon this date the National Convention passed its Decree of Fraternization, proffering in the name of the French nation fraternity and assistance to all those people who wish to procure liberty, and charging the executive to order the generals to act in the spirit of this decree. This magnificent vaunt sprang from recent military successes.

am not one of those, Sir, who attach much interest to the general and indiscriminate provocations thrown out at random, like this resolution of the 19th of November, 1792. I do not think it necessary to the dignity of any people to notice and to apply to themselves menaces flung out without particular allusion, which are always unwise in the power which uses them, and which it is still more unwise to treat with seriousness. But if any such idle and general provocation to nations is given, either in insolence or in folly, by any government, it is a clear first principle that an explanation is the thing which a magnanimous nation, feeling itself aggrieved, ought to demand; and if an explanation be given which is not satisfactory, it ought clearly and distinctly to say so. There ought to be no ambiguity,<sup>o</sup> no reserve, on the occasion. Now we all know from documents on our table that M. Chauvelin did give an explanation of this silly decree. He declared in the name of his government "that it was never meant that the French government should favor insurrections; that the decree was applicable only to those people who, after having acquired their liberty by conquest, should demand the assistance of the republic; but that France would respect, not only the independence of England, but also that of her allies with whom she was not at war." This was the explanation given of the offensive decree. "But this explanation was not satisfactory!"<sup>7</sup> Did you say so to M. Chau-

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<sup>7</sup> France had, on every occasion, since the commencement of her revolution, expressed a constant and anxious solicitude to preserve a good understanding with this country. Nothing can be more emphatically expressive of these sentiments than the note which M. de Chauvelin presented upon this subject to Lord Grenville.—*Miller's Continuation of Hume's History of England*,

velin? Did you tell him that you were not content with this explanation? And when you dismissed him afterward, on the death of the king<sup>8</sup> did you say that this explanation was unsatisfactory? No; you did no such thing: and I contend that unless you demanded further explanations, and they were refused, you have no right to urge the decree of the 19th of November as an act of aggression.

6 The right honorable gentleman has this night, for the first time, produced a most important paper—the instructions which were given to his Majesty's minister at the court of St. Petersburg about the end of the year 1792, to interest her Imperial Majesty<sup>9</sup> to join her efforts with those of his Britannic Majesty to prevent, by their joint mediation, the evils of a general war. Of this paper, and of the existence of any such document, I for one was entirely ignorant; but I have no hesitation in saying that I completely approve of the instructions which appear to have been given; and I am sorry to see the right honorable gentleman disposed rather to take blame to himself than credit for having written it. He thinks that he shall be subject to the imputation of having been rather too slow to apprehend the dangers with which the French revolution was fraught, than that he was forward and hasty—" *Quod solum excusat, hoc solum miror in illo.*"<sup>10</sup> I do not agree with him on the idea of censure. I by no means think that he was blameable for too much confidence in the good intentions of

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<sup>8</sup> Louis XVI.

<sup>9</sup> Empress Catherine.

<sup>10</sup> "The thing which he would excuse is the one thing in him which I admire."

the French. I think the tenor and composition of this paper was excellent—the instructions conveyed in it wise; and that it wanted but one essential thing to have entitled it to general approbation—namely, to be acted upon. The clear nature and intent of that paper I take to be, that our ministers were to solicit the court of Petersburg to join with them in a declaration to the French government, stating explicitly what course of conduct, with respect to their foreign relations, they thought necessary to the general peace and security of Europe, and what, if complied with, would have induced them to mediate for that purpose—a proper, wise, and legitimate course of proceeding. Now I ask, Sir, whether, if this paper had been communicated to Paris at the end of the year 1792, instead of Petersburg, it would not have been productive of most seasonable benefits to mankind; and by informing the French in time of the means by which they might have secured the mediation of Great Britain, have not only avoided the rupture with this country, but have also restored general peace to the continent? The paper, Sir, was excellent in its intentions; but its merit was all in the composition. It was a fine theory, which ministers did not think proper to carry into practice. Nay, on the contrary, at the very time they were drawing up this paper they were insulting M. Chauvelin in every way, until about the 23d or 24th of January, 1793, when they finally dismissed him, without stating any one ground upon which they were willing to preserve terms with the French.

7 “But France,” it seems, “then declared war against us; and she was the aggressor, because the declaration came from her.” Let us look at the circumstances of



this transaction on both sides. Undoubtedly the declaration was made by her; but is a declaration the only thing that constitutes the commencement of a war? Do gentlemen recollect that, in consequence of a dispute about the commencement of war, respecting the capture of a number of ships, an article was inserted in our treaty with France, by which it was positively stipulated that in future, to prevent all disputes, the act of the dismissal of a minister from either of the two courts should be held and considered as tantamount to a declaration of war? I mention this, Sir, because when we are idly employed in this retrospect of the origin of a war which has lasted so many years, instead of fixing our eyes only to the contemplation of the means of putting an end to it, we seem disposed to overlook everything on our own parts, and to search only for grounds of imputation on the enemy. I almost think it an insult on the House to detain them with this sort of examination.

8 I really, Sir, cannot think it necessary to follow the right honorable gentleman into all the minute details which he has thought proper to give us respecting the first aggression; but that Austria and Prussia were the aggressors not a man in any country, who has ever given himself the trouble to think at all on the subject, can doubt. Nothing could be more hostile than their whole proceedings. Did they not declare to France that it was their internal concerns, not their external proceedings, which provoked them to confederate against her? Look back to the proclamations with which they set out. Read the declarations which they made themselves to justify their appeal to arms. They did not pretend to fear their ambition, their conquests, their troubling their neighbors;

but they accused them of new-modeling their own government. They said nothing of their aggressions abroad; they spoke only of their clubs and societies at Paris.

9 Sir, in all this I am not justifying the French — I am not striving to absolve them from blame, either in their internal or external policy. I think, on the contrary, that their successive rulers have been as bad and as execrable, in various instances, as any of the most despotic and unprincipled governments that the world ever saw. I think it impossible, Sir, that it should have been otherwise. It was not to be expected that the French, when once engaged in foreign wars, should not endeavor to spread destruction around them, and to form plans of aggrandizement and plunder on every side. Men bred in the school of the House of Bourbon could not be expected to act otherwise. They could not have lived so long under their ancient masters without imbibing the restless ambition, the perfidy, and the insatiable spirit of the race. They have imitated the practice of their great prototype,<sup>o</sup> and through their whole career of mischief and of crimes have done no more than servilely trace the steps of their own Louis XIV. If they have overrun countries and ravaged them, they have done it upon Bourbon principles. If they have ruined and dethroned sovereigns, it is entirely after the Bourbon manner. If they have even fraternized with the people of foreign countries, and pretended to make their cause their own, they have only faithfully followed the Bourbon example. They have constantly had Louis, the grand monarch, in their eye.

10 But it may be said that this example was long ago, and that we ought not to refer to a period so distant. True, it is a distant period as applied to the man, but

not so to the principle. The principle was never extinct; nor has its operation been suspended in France, except, perhaps, for a short interval during the administration of Cardinal Fleury; and my complaint against the republic of France is, not that she has generated new crimes, not that she has promulgated new mischief, but that she has adopted and acted upon the principles which have been so fatal to Europe under the practice of the House of Bourbon. It is said that wherever the French have gone, they have introduced revolution; that they have sought for the means of disturbing neighboring states, and have not been content with mere conquest. What is this but adopting the ingenious scheme of Louis XIV.? He was not content with merely overrunning a state;—whenever he came into a new territory he established what he called his Chamber of Claims; a most convenient device, by which he inquired whether the conquered country or province had any dormant or disputed claims, any cause of complaint, any unsettled demand upon any other state or province—upon which he might wage war upon such state, thereby discover again ground for new devastation, and gratify his ambition by new acquisitions. What have the republicans done more atrocious, more Jacobinical, than this?

11 Louis went to war with Holland. His pretext was that Holland had not treated him with sufficient respect;—a very just and proper cause for war, indeed! This, Sir, leads me to an example which I think seasonable, and worthy the attention of his Majesty's ministers. When our Charles II., as a short exception to the policy of his reign, made the triple alliance <sup>11</sup> for the protection

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<sup>11</sup> England, Holland, Sweden.

of Europe, and particularly of Holland, against the ambition of Louis XIV., what was the conduct of that great, virtuous, and most able statesman, M. de Witt <sup>12</sup> when the confederates came to deliberate on the terms upon which they should treat with the French monarch? When it was said that he had made unprincipled conquests, and that he ought to be forced to surrender them all, what was the language of the great and wise man? "No," said he; "I think we ought not to look back to the origin of the war so much as to the means of putting an end to it. If you had united in time to prevent these conquests, well; but now that he has made them, he stands upon the ground of conquest, and we must agree to treat with him, not with reference to the origin of the conquest but with regard to his present posture." He has those places, and some of them we must be content to give up as the means of peace, for conquest will always successfully set up its claims to indemnification." Such was the language of this minister, who was the ornament of his time; and such, in my mind, ought to be the language of statesmen with regard to the French at this day. The same ought to have been said at the formation of the confederacy. It was true that the French had overrun Savoy; but they had overrun it upon Bourbon principles; and having gained this and other conquests before the confederacy was formed, they ought to have treated with her rather for future security than for past

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<sup>12</sup> Grand Pensionary de Witt, a stout upholder of pure republican government in Holland. A few years after the time alluded to in the text, England and France were combined against Holland. De Witt, to save something from such odds offered terms which roused the populace to fury. De Witt and his brother were slain. The young Prince of Orange, afterward William III. of England, was made Stadtholder for life.

correction. States in possession, whether monarchical or republican, will claim indemnity in proportion to their success; and it will never be so much inquired by what right they gained possession as by what means they can be prevented from enlarging their depredations. Such is the safe practice of the world; and such ought to have been the conduct of the powers when the reduction of Savoy made them coalesce.

12 The right honorable gentleman may know more of the secret particulars of their overrunning Savoy than I do; but certainly, as they have come to my knowledge, it was a most Bourbon-like act. A great and justly celebrated historian, whom I will not call a foreigner — I mean Mr. Hume (a writer certainly estimable in many particulars, but who was a childish lover of princes) — talks of Louis XIV. in very magnificent terms; but he says of him that, though he managed his enterprises with skill and bravery, he was unfortunate in this, that he never got a good and fair pretense for war. This he reckons among his misfortunes! Can we say more of the republican French? In seizing on Savoy I think they made use of the words, "*convenances morales et physiques*." <sup>13</sup> These were their reasons. A most Bourbon-like phrase! And I therefore contend that as we never scrupled to treat with the princes of the House of Bourbon on account of their rapacity, their thirst of conquest, their violation of treaties, their perfidy, and their restless spirit, so we ought not to refuse to treat with their republican imitators. Ministers could not pretend ignorance of the unprincipled manner in which the French had seized on Savoy. The

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<sup>13</sup> "France and Savoy were already connected by physical and moral ties." This was part of France's claim.



Sardinian minister complained of the aggression, and yet no stir was made about it. The courts of Europe stood by and saw the outrage; and our minister saw it.

At that time, however, the right honorable gentleman makes it his boast that he was prevented by a sense of neutrality from taking any measures of precaution on the subject. I do not give the right honorable gentleman much credit for his spirit of neutrality on the occasion. It flowed from the sense of the country at the time, the great majority of which was clearly and decidedly against all interruptions being given to the French in their desire of regulating their own internal government.

13 My opinion is, that when the unfortunate King of France offered to us, in the letter delivered by M. Chauvelin and M. Talleyrand, and even entreated us to mediate between him and the allied powers of Austria and Prussia, we ought to have accepted the offer and exerted our influence to save Europe from the consequence of a system which was then beginning to manifest itself. It was, at least, a question of prudence; and as we had never refused to treat and to mediate with the old princes on account of their ambition or their perfidy, we ought to have been equally ready now, when the same principles were acted upon by other men. I must doubt the sensibility which could be so cold and so indifferent at the proper moment for its activity. I fear that there was at that moment the germs of ambition rising in the mind of the right honorable gentleman, and that he was beginning, like others, to entertain hopes that something might be obtained out of the coming confusion. What but such a sentiment could have prevented him from overlooking the fair occasion that was offered for preventing



the calamities with which Europe was threatened? What but some such interested principle could have made him forego the truly honorable task by which his administration would have displayed its magnanimity and its power? But for some such feeling would not this country, both in wisdom and in dignity, have interfered, and in conjunction with the other powers have said to France, "You ask for a mediation; we will mediate with candor and sincerity, but we will at the same time declare to you our apprehensions.

14 "We do not trust to your assertion of a determination to avoid all foreign conquest, and that you are desirous only of settling your own constitution, because your language is contradicted by experience and the evidence of facts. You are Frenchmen, and you cannot so soon have thrown off the Bourbon principles in which you were educated. You have already imitated the bad practice of your princes; you have seized on Savoy<sup>14</sup> without a color of right. But here we take our stand. Thus far you have gone, and we cannot help it; but you must go no farther. We will tell you distinctly what we shall consider as an attack on the balance and the security of Europe; and, as the condition of our interference, we will tell you also the securities that we think essential to the general repose." This ought to have been the language of his Majesty's ministers when their mediation was solicited; and something of this kind they evidently thought of when they sent the instructions to Peters-

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<sup>14</sup> The National Convention by decree, 1792, erected the duchy of Savoy into a department of the French Republic, contrary to an article of the constitution in which she renounced all foreign conquest. It is so much easier to let go before taking hold.

burg which they have mentioned this night, but upon which they never acted. Having not done so, I say they have no claim to talk now about the violated rights of Europe, about the aggression of the French, and about the origin of the war in which this country was so suddenly afterward plunged. Instead of this, what did they do? They hung back; they avoided explanation; they gave the French no means of satisfying them; and I repeat my proposition — when there is a question of peace and war between two nations, that government feels itself in the wrong which refuses to state with clearness and precision what she would consider as a satisfaction and a pledge of peace.

15 Sir, if I understand the true precepts of the Christian religion, as set forth in the New Testament, I must be permitted to say that there is no such thing as a rule or doctrine by which we are directed, or can be justified, in waging a war for religion. The idea is subversive of the very foundations upon which it stands, which are those of peace and good-will among men. Religion never was, and never can be, a justifiable cause of war; but it has been too often grossly used as the pretext and the apology for the most unprincipled wars.

16 I have already said, and I repeat it, that the conduct of the French to foreign nations cannot be justified. They have given great cause of offense, but certainly not to all countries alike. The right honorable gentlemen opposite to me have made an indiscriminate catalogue of all the countries which the French have offended, and, in their eagerness to throw odium on the nation, have taken no pains to investigate the sources of their several quarrels. I will not detain the House by entering into the long

detail which has been given of their aggressions and their violences; but let me mention Sardinia as one instance which has been strongly insisted upon. Did the French attack Sardinia when at peace with them? No such thing. The King of Sardinia had accepted of a subsidy from Great Britain; and Sardinia was, to all intents and purposes, a belligerent power. Several other instances might be mentioned; but though perhaps in the majority of instances the French may be unjustifiable, is this the moment for us to dwell upon these enormities — to waste our time and inflame our passions by recriminating upon each other? There is no end to such a war. I have somewhere read, I think in Sir Walter Raleigh's <sup>15</sup> *History of the World*, of a most bloody and fatal battle which was fought by two opposite armies, in which almost all the combatants on both sides were killed, "because," says the historian, "though they had offensive weapons on both sides, they had none for defense." So, in this war of words, if we are to use only offensive weapons, if we are to indulge only in invective and abuse, the contest must be eternal.

17 Surely, Sir, if we must be thus rigid in scrutinizing the conduct of an enemy, we ought to be equally careful in not committing our honor and our safety with an ally who has manifested the same want of respect for the rights of other nations. Surely, if it is material to know the character of a power with whom you are only about

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<sup>15</sup> An accomplished courtier, soldier, writer in "the spacious times of Great Elizabeth." He wrote his *History* while a prisoner of state in the Tower. His sentence of death was suspended, he commanded an expedition to South America, did things which caused him to be imprisoned again, and he was finally beheaded in execution of the original sentence. For the thrilling story see Hume.

to treat for peace, it is more material to know the character of allies, with whom you are about to enter into the closest connection of friendship, and for whose exertions you are about to pay.

18 Now, Sir, what was the conduct of your own allies to Poland? Is there a single atrocity of the French in Italy, in Switzerland, in Egypt if you please, more unprincipled and inhuman than that of Russia, Austria, and Prussia in Poland? What has there been in the conduct of the French to foreign powers; what in the violation of solemn treaties; what in the plunder, devastation, and dismemberment of unoffending countries; what in the horrors and murders perpetrated upon the subdued victims of their rage in any district which they have overrun, worse than the conduct of those three great powers in the miserable, devoted, and trampled-on kingdom of Poland, and who have been, or are, our allies in this war for religion, social order, and the rights of nations?

19 "Oh! but we regretted the partition of Poland!"<sup>16</sup> Yes, regretted! you regretted the violence, and that is all you did. You united yourselves with the actors; you, in fact, by your acquiescence, confirmed the atrocity. But they are your allies; and though they overran and divided Poland, there was nothing, perhaps, in the manner of doing it which stamped it with peculiar infamy and disgrace. The hero of Poland,<sup>17</sup> perhaps, was merciful and mild. He was "as much superior to Bonaparte in bravery, and in the discipline which he maintained, as

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<sup>16</sup> A first, second, and third partition of Poland in 1772, 1793, and 1795.

"And Freedom shrieked when Kosciusko fell."

<sup>17</sup> Frederick William II. of Prussia.

he was superior in virtue and humanity! He was animated by the purest principles of Christianity, and was restrained in his career by the benevolent precepts which it inculcates." Was he? Let unfortunate Warsaw, and the miserable inhabitants of the suburb of Praga in particular, tell! What do we understand to have been the conduct of this magnanimous hero, with whom, it seems, Bonaparte is not to be compared? He entered the suburb of Praga,<sup>18</sup> the most populous suburb of Warsaw; and there he let his soldiery loose on the miserable, unarmed, and unresisting people! Men, women, and children, nay, infants at the breast, were doomed to one indiscriminate massacre. Thousands of them were inhumanly, wantonly butchered! And for what? Because they had dared to join in a wish to ameliorate their own condition as a people, and to improve their constitution, which had been confessed by their own sovereign<sup>19</sup> to be in want of amendment. And such is the hero upon whom the cause of "religion and social order" is to repose! And such is the man whom we praise for his discipline and his virtue, and whom we hold out as our boast and our dependence, while the conduct of Bonaparte unfits him to be even treated with as an enemy!

20 But the behavior of the French toward Switzerland raises all the indignation of the right honorable gentleman and inflames his eloquence. I admire the indignation which he expresses (and I think he felt it) in speak-

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<sup>18</sup> Nov. 4, 1794.

"Oh, bloodiest picture in the book of Time,  
Sarmatia (Poland) fell, unwept, without a crime;  
Found not a generous friend, a pitying foe."

— *Campbell*.

<sup>19</sup> Stanislaus II.

ing of this country, so dear and so congenial to every man who loves the sacred name of liberty. He who loves liberty, says the right honorable gentleman, thought himself at home on the favored and happy mountains of Switzerland, where she seemed to have taken up her abode under a sort of implied compact, among all other states, that she should not be disturbed in this her chosen asylum. I admire the eloquence of the right honorable gentleman in speaking of this country of liberty and peace, to which every man would desire, once in his life at least, to make a pilgrimage. But who, let me ask him, first proposed to the Swiss people to depart from the neutrality which was their chief protection and to join the confederacy against the French? I aver that a noble relation of mine (Lord Robert Fitzgerald), then the minister of England to the Swiss Cantons, was instructed, in direct terms, to propose to the Swiss, by an official note, to break from the safe line they had laid down for themselves, and to tell them "in such a contest neutrality was criminal." I know that noble lord too well, though I have not been in habits of intercourse with him of late, from the employments in which he has been engaged, to suspect that he would have presented such a paper without the express instructions of his court, or that he would have gone beyond those instructions.

21 But was it only to Switzerland that this sort of language was held? What was our language also to Tuscany and to Genoa? An honorable gentleman (Mr. Canning)<sup>20</sup> has denied the authenticity<sup>21</sup> of a pretended

<sup>20</sup> As England's premier, he discussed the Monroe Doctrine with President Monroe's Secretary of State, favoring it as against the Holy Alliance.

<sup>21</sup> genuineness?



letter which has been circulated and ascribed to Lord Harvey.<sup>22</sup> He says it is all a fable and a forgery. Be it so; but is it also a fable that Lord Harvey did speak in terms to the grand duke<sup>23</sup> which he considered as offensive and insulting? I cannot tell, for I was not present. But was it not, and is it not believed? Is it a fable that Lord Harvey went into the closet of the grand duke, laid his watch upon the table, and demanded in a peremptory<sup>o</sup> manner that he should, within a certain number of minutes, I think I have heard within a quarter of an hour, determine, aye or no, to dismiss the French minister, and order him out of his dominions; with the menace that if he did not the English fleet should bombard Leghorn? Will the honorable gentleman deny this also? I certainly do not know it from my own knowledge; but I know that persons of the first credit, then at Florence, have stated these facts, and that they never have been contradicted. It is true that upon the grand duke's complaint of this indignity Lord Harvey was recalled; but was the principle recalled? Was the mission recalled? Did not ministers persist in the demand which Lord Harvey had made, perhaps ungraciously? Was not the grand duke forced, in consequence, to dismiss the French minister? and did they not drive him to enter into an unwilling war with the republic? It is true that he afterward made his peace; and that, having done so, he was treated severely and unjustly by the French. But what do I conclude from all this but that we have no right to be scrupulous, we who have violated the respect due to peaceable powers ourselves in this war, which,

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<sup>22</sup> English minister to Tuscany.

<sup>23</sup> Of Tuscany.

more than any other that ever afflicted human nature, has been distinguished by the greatest number of disgusting and outrageous insults to the smaller powers by the great.

22 And I infer from this also that the instances not being confined to the French, but having been perpetrated by every one of the allies, and by England as much as by others, we have no right to refuse to treat with the French on this ground. Need I speak of your conduct to Genoa also? Perhaps the note delivered by Mr. Drake was also a forgery. Perhaps the blockade<sup>24</sup> of the port never took place. It is impossible to deny the facts, which were so glaring at the time. It is a painful thing to me, Sir, to be obliged to go back to these unfortunate periods of the history of this war, and of the conduct of this country; but I am forced to the task by the use which has been made of the atrocities of the French as an argument against negotiation. I think I have said enough to prove that if the French have been guilty, we have not been innocent. Nothing but determined incredulity<sup>o</sup> can make us deaf and blind to our own acts, when we are so ready to yield an assent to all the reproaches which are thrown out on the enemy, and upon which reproaches we are gravely told to continue the war.

23 "But France," it seems, "has roused all the nations of Europe against her;" and the long catalogue has been read to you to prove that she must have been atrocious to provoke them all. Is it true, Sir, that she has roused them all? It does not say much for the address of his Majesty's ministers if this be the case. What, Sir, have all your negotiations, all your declamation, all

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<sup>24</sup> By the Austrians, assisted by a British fleet. Massena defended the city with great ability, but was forced to evacuate it.

your money, been squandered in vain? Have you not succeeded in stirring the indignation and engaging the assistance of a single power? But you do yourselves injustice. I dare say the truth lies between you. Between their crimes and your money the rage has been excited; and full as much is due to your seductions as to her atrocities. My learned friend was correct, therefore, in his argument; for you cannot take both sides of the case: you cannot accuse them of having provoked all Europe, and at the same time claim the merit of having roused them to join you.

24 No man regrets, Sir, more than I do, the enormities that France has committed; but how do they bear upon the question as it now stands? Are we forever to deprive ourselves of the benefits of peace because France has perpetrated acts of injustice? Sir, we cannot acquit ourselves upon such ground. We have negotiated. With the knowledge of these acts of injustice and disorder, we have treated with them twice; yet the right honorable gentleman cannot enter into negotiation with them now; and it is worth while to attend to the reasons that he gives for refusing their offer. The revolution itself is no more an objection now than it was in 1796, when he did negotiate;<sup>25</sup> for the government of France at that time was surely as unstable as it is now. The crimes of the French, the instability of their government, did not then prevent him; and why are they to prevent him now? He negotiated with a government as unstable, and, baffled in that negotiation, he did not scruple to open another at Lisle in 1797.<sup>25</sup> We have heard a very curious account of these negotiations this day, and, as the right honorable

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<sup>25</sup> See notes to paragraphs 2 and 38.

gentleman has emphatically told us, an "honest" account of them. He says he has no scruple in avowing that he apprehended danger from the success of his own efforts to procure a pacification, and that he was not displeased at its failure. He was sincere in his endeavors to treat, but he was not disappointed when they failed. I wish to understand the right honorable gentleman correctly. His declaration on the subject, then, I take to be this — that though sincere in his endeavors to procure peace in 1797, yet he apprehended greater danger from accomplishing his object than from the continuance of war; and that he felt this apprehension from the comparative views of the probable state of peace and war at that time.

25 I have no hesitation in allowing the fact that a state of peace, immediately after a war of such violence, must, in some respects, be a state of insecurity; but does this not belong, in a certain degree, to all wars? And are we never to have peace, because that peace may be insecure? But there was something, it seems, so peculiar in this war and in the character and principles of the enemy, that the right honorable gentleman thought a peace in 1797 would be comparatively more dangerous than war. Why, then, did he treat? I beg the attention of the House to this — He treated, "because the unequivocal sense of the people of England was declared to be in favor of a negotiation." The right honorable gentleman confesses the truth, then, that in 1797 the people were for peace. I thought so at the time; but you all recollect that, when I stated it in my place, it was denied. "True," they said, "you have procured petitions; but we have petitions, too: we all know in what strange ways petitions may be procured, and how little they deserve

to be considered as the sense of the people." This was their language at the time; but now we find these petitions did speak the sense of the people, and that it was on this side of the House only that the sense of the people was spoken. The majority spoke a contrary language. It is acknowledged, then, that the unequivocal sense of the people of England may be spoken by the minority of this House, and that it is not always by the test of numbers that an honest decision is to be ascertained. This House decided against what the right honorable gentleman knew to be the sense of the country; but he himself acted upon that sense against the vote of parliament.

26 But, they say, "we have not refused all discussion." They have put a case. They have expressed a wish for the restoration of the House of Bourbon, and have declared that to be an event which would immediately remove every obstacle to negotiation. Sir, as to the restoration of the House of Bourbon, if it shall be the wish of the people of France, I for one shall be perfectly content to acquiesce. I think the people of France, as well as every other people, ought to have the government which they like best themselves; and the form of that government, or the persons who hold it in their hands, should never be an obstacle with me to treat with the nation for peace, or to live with me in amity—but as an Englishman, and actuated by English feelings, I surely cannot wish for the restoration of the House of Bourbon to the throne of France. I hope that I am not a man to bear heavily upon any unfortunate family. I feel for their situation,—I respect their distresses,—but, as a friend of England, I cannot wish for their restoration

to the power which they abused. I cannot forget that the whole history of the century is little more than an account of the wars and the calamities arising from the restless ambition, the intrigues, and the perfidy of the House of Bourbon.

27 I cannot discover, in any part of the labored defense which has been set up for not accepting the offer now made by France, any argument to satisfy my mind that ministers have not forfeited the test which they held out as infallible in 1797. An honorable gentleman thinks that Parliament should be eager only to approach the throne with declarations of their readiness to support his Majesty in the further prosecution of the war, without inquiry; and he is quite delighted with an address, which he has found upon the journals, to King William,<sup>26</sup> in which they pledge themselves to support him in his efforts to resist the ambition of Louis XIV. He thinks it quite astonishing how much it is in point, and how perfectly it applies to the present occasion. One would have thought, Sir, that in order to prove the application, he would have shown that an offer had been respectfully made by the grand monarque to King William to treat, which he had peremptorily and in very irritating terms refused; and that, upon this, the House of Commons had come forward, and with one voice declared their determination to stand by him, with their lives and fortunes, in prosecuting the just and necessary war. Not a word of all this; and yet the honorable gentleman finds it quite a parallel case, and an exact model for the House, on this day, to pursue. I really think, Sir, he might as well have taken any other address upon the Journals, upon

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<sup>26</sup> William III. of England.



any other topic, as this address to King William. It would have been equally in point, and would have equally served to show the honorable gentleman's talents for reasoning.

28 Sir, I cannot here overlook another instance of this honorable gentleman's candid style of debating, and of his respect for Parliament. He has found out, it seems, that in former periods of our history, and even in periods which have been denominated good times, intercepted letters have been published; and he reads from the *Gazette* instances of such publication. Really, Sir, if the honorable gentleman had pursued the profession to which he turned his thoughts when younger, he would have learned that it was necessary to find cases a little more in point. And yet, full of his triumph on this notable discovery, he has chosen to indulge himself in speaking of a most respectable and a most honorable person as any that this country knows, and who is possessed of as sound an understanding as any man that I have the good fortune to be acquainted with, in terms the most offensive and disgusting, on account of words which he may be supposed to have said in another place. He has spoken of that noble person and of his intellect in terms which, were I disposed to retort, I might say show the honorable gentleman to be possessed of an intellect which would justify me in passing over in silence anything that comes from such a man. Sir, that noble person did not speak of the mere act of publishing the intercepted correspondence; and the honorable gentleman's reference to the *Gazettes* of former periods is, therefore, not in point.

29 The noble duke complained of the manner in which these intercepted letters had been published, not of the

fact itself of their publication; for, in the introduction and notes to those letters, the ribaldry is such that they are not screened from the execration of every honorable mind even by their extreme stupidity. The honorable gentleman says that he must treat with indifference the intellect of a man who can ascribe the present scarcity of corn to the war. Sir, I think there is nothing either absurd or unjust in such an opinion. Does not the war, necessarily, by its magazines, and still more by its expeditions, increase consumption? But when we learn that corn is, at this very moment, sold in France for less than half the price which it bears here, is it not a fair thing to suppose that, but for the war and its prohibitions, a part of that grain would be brought to this country, on account of the high price which it would sell for, and that, consequently, our scarcity would be relieved from their abundance? I speak only upon report, of course; but I see that the price quoted in the French markets is less by one half than the prices in England.

30 There was nothing, therefore, very absurd in what fell from my noble friend; and I would really advise the honorable gentleman, when he speaks of persons distinguished for every virtue, to be a little more guarded in his language. I see no reason why he and his friends should not leave to persons in another place, holding the same opinions as themselves, the task of answering what may be thrown out there. Is not the phalanx sufficient? It is no great compliment to their talents, considering their number, that they cannot be left to the task of answering the few to whom they are opposed; but perhaps the honorable gentleman has too

little to do in this House, and is to be sent there himself. In truth, I see no reason why even he might not be sent, as well as some others who have been sent there.

31 But, Sir, I meet the right honorable gentleman on his own ground. I say that you ought to treat on the same principle on which you treated in 1797, in order to gain the cordial co-operation of the people. "We want experience and the evidence of facts." Can there be any evidence of facts equal to that of a frank, open, and candid negotiation? Let us see whether Bonaparte will display the same temper as his predecessors. If he shall do so, then you will confirm the people of England in their opinion of the necessity of continuing the war, and you will revive all the vigor which you roused in 1797. Or will you not do this until you have a reverse of fortune? Will you never treat but when you are in a situation of distress, and when you have occasion to impose on the people?

32 "But," you say, "we have not refused to treat." You have stated a case in which you will be ready immediately to enter into a negotiation — viz., the restoration of the House of Bourbon; but you deny that this is a *sine quâ non*; <sup>27</sup> and in your nonsensical language, which I do not understand, you talk of "limited possibilities" which may induce you to treat without the restoration of the House of Bourbon. But do you state what they are? Now, Sir, I say that if you put one case, upon which you declare that you are willing to treat immediately, and say that there are other possible cases which may induce you to treat hereafter, without mentioning what these possible cases are, you do state a

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<sup>27</sup> an absolute essential.

*sine quâ non* of immediate treaty. Suppose I have an estate to sell, and I say my demand is £1,000 for it — I will sell the estate immediately for that sum. To be sure, there may be other terms upon which I may be willing to part with it; but I say nothing of them. The £1,000 is the only condition that I state now. Will any gentleman say that I do not make the £1,000 the *sine quâ non* of the immediate sale? Thus, you say, the restoration of the princes is not the only possible ground; but you give no other. This is your *projet*.<sup>28</sup> Do you demand a *contre projet*? Do you follow your own rule? Do you not do the thing of which you complained in the enemy? You seemed to be afraid of receiving another proposition; and by confining yourselves to this one point you make it in fact, though not in terms, your *sine quâ non*.

33 But the right honorable gentleman, in his speech, does what the official note avoids — he finds there the convenient words, “experience and the evidence of facts;” upon these he goes into detail; and, in order to convince the House that new evidence is required, he goes back to all the earliest acts and crimes of the revolution — to all the atrocities of all the governments that have passed away; and he contends that he must have experience that these foul crimes are repented of, and that a purer and a better system is adopted in France, by which he may be sure that they shall be capable of maintaining the relations of peace and amity. Sir, these are not conciliatory words; nor is this a practicable ground to gain experience. Does he think it possible

<sup>28</sup> In international law, a draft of a proposed treaty. A *contre projet* would be such a paper from the other side.

that evidence of a peaceable demeanor can be obtained in war? What does he mean to say to the French consul? "Until you shall in war behave yourself in a peaceable manner, I will not treat with you." Is there not something extremely ridiculous in this? In duels, indeed, we have often heard of this kind of language. Two gentlemen go out and fight; when, after discharging their pistols at one another, it is not an unusual thing for one of them to say to the other — "Now I am satisfied — I see that you are a man of honor, and we are friends again." There is something, by-the-bye, ridiculous even in this; but between nations it is more than ridiculous — it is criminal. It is a ground which no principle can justify, and which is as impracticable as it is impious. That two nations should be set on to beat one another into friendship is too abominable even for the fiction of romance; but for a statesman seriously and gravely to lay it down as a system upon which he means to act is monstrous. What can we say of such a test as he means to put the French government to, but that it is hopeless? It is in the nature of war to inflame animosity — to exasperate, not to soothe, to widen, not to approximate. And so long as this is to be acted upon, it is vain to hope that we can have the evidence which we require.

34 The right honorable gentleman, however, thinks otherwise; and he points out four distinct possible cases, besides the re-establishment of the Bourbon family, in which he would agree to treat with the French.

1. "If Bonaparte shall conduct himself so as to convince him that he has abandoned the principles which were objectionable in his predecessors, and that he shall

be actuated by a more moderate system." I ask you, Sir, if this is likely to be ascertained in war? It is the nature of war not to allay but to inflame the passions; and it is not by the invective and abuse which have been thrown upon him and his government, nor by the continued irritations which war is sure to give, that the virtues of moderation and forbearance are to be nourished.

2. "If, contrary to the expectations of ministers, the people of France shall show a disposition to acquiesce in the government of Bonaparte." Does the right honorable gentleman mean to say that because it is an usurpation on the part of the present chief, therefore the people are not likely to acquiesce in it? I have not time, Sir, to discuss the question of this usurpation, or whether it is likely to be permanent; but I certainly have not so good an opinion of the French, or of any people, as to believe that it will be short-lived, merely because it was a usurpation, and because it is a system of military despotism. Cromwell was a usurper;<sup>29</sup> and in many points there may be found a resemblance between him and the present chief consul of France. There is no doubt but that, on several occasions of his life, Cromwell's sincerity may be questioned, particularly in his self-denying ordinance—in his affected piety, and other things; but would it not have been insanity in France and Spain to refuse to treat with him because he was a usurper? No, Sir; these are not the maxims by which governments are actuated. They do not inquire so much into the means by which power may have been acquired, as into the fact of where the power resides. The people did acquiesce in the government of Cromwell;<sup>30</sup> but it

<sup>29</sup> "The sagest of usurpers, Cromwell."—*Byron*.

<sup>30</sup> During the Commonwealth, 1653–1659.



may be said that the splendor of his talents, the vigor of his administration, the high tone with which he spoke to foreign nations, the success of his arms, and the character which he gave to the English name, induced the nation to acquiesce in his usurpation; and that we must not try Bonaparte by this example. Will it be said that Bonaparte is not a man of great abilities? Will it be said that he has not, by his victories, thrown a splendor over even the violence of the revolution, and that he does not conciliate the French people by the high and lofty tone in which he speaks to foreign nations? Are not the French, then, as likely as the English in the case of Cromwell to acquiesce in his government? If they should do so, the right honorable gentleman may find that this possible predicament may fail him. He may find that though one power may make war, it requires two to make peace. He may find that Bonaparte was as insincere as himself in the proposition which he made; and in his turn he may come forward and say —“ I have no occasion now for concealment. It is true that in the beginning of the year 1800 I offered to treat, not because I wished for peace, but because the people of France wished for it; and besides, my old resources being exhausted, and there being no means of carrying on the war without a ‘ new and solid system of finance,’ I pretended to treat, because I wished to procure the unanimous assent of the French people to this new and solid system. Did you think I was in earnest? You were deceived. I now throw off the mask; I have gained my point; and I reject your offers with scorn.” Is it not a very possible case that he may use this language? Is it not within the right honorable gentleman’s “ knowledge of human nature ”? But even if this should not be the

case, will not the very test which you require — the acquiescence of the people of France in his government — give him an advantage-ground in the negotiation which he does not possess now? Is it quite sure that when he finds himself safe in his seat he will treat on the same terms as now, and that you will get a better peace some time hence than you might reasonably hope to obtain at this moment? Will he not have one interest less than at present? And do you not overlook a favorable occasion for a chance which is extremely doubtful? These are the considerations which I would urge to his Majesty's ministers against the dangerous experiment of waiting for the acquiescence of the people of France.

3. "If the allies of this country shall be less successful than they have every reason to expect they will be in stirring up the people of France against Bonaparte, and in the further prosecution of the war." And,

4. "If the pressure of the war should be heavier upon us than it would be convenient for us to continue to bear." These are the other two possible emergencies in which the right honorable gentleman would treat even with Bonaparte. Sir, I have often blamed the right honorable gentleman for being disingenuous<sup>o</sup> and insincere. On the present occasion I certainly cannot charge him with any such thing. He has made to-night a most honest confession. He is open and candid. He tells Bonaparte fairly what he has to expect. "I mean," says he, "to do everything in my power to raise up the people of France against you. I have engaged a number of allies, and our combined efforts shall be used to excite insurrection and civil war in France. I will strive to murder you, or to get you sent away. If I succeed,

well; but if I fail, then I will treat with you. My resources being exhausted, even my solid system of finance having failed to supply me with the means of keeping together my allies, and of feeding the discontents I have excited in France, then you may expect to see me renounce my high tone, my attachment to the House of Bourbon, my abhorrence of your crimes, my alarm at your principles; for then I shall be ready to own that, on the balance and comparison of circumstances, there will be less danger in concluding a peace than in the continuance of war!" Is this a language for one state to hold to another? And what sort of peace does the right honorable gentleman expect to receive in that case? Does he think that Bonaparte would grant to baffled insolence, to humiliated pride, to disappointment, and to imbecility the same terms which he would be ready to give now? The right honorable gentleman cannot have forgotten what he said on another occasion —

“ — Potuit quæ plurima virtus  
Esse, fuit: toto certatum est corpore regni.” <sup>31</sup>

He would then have to repeat his words, but with a different application. He would have to say: All our efforts are vain — we have exhausted our strength — our designs are impracticable — and we must sue to you for peace.

Sir, what is the question this night? We are called

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<sup>31</sup> *Æneid*, XI, 312, 313. Latinus bewails his failing fortunes, and proposes to his Council terms of peace with the Trojans. He tells them: "I blame no one. The highest type of valor was yours; the war has been fought with the whole resources of the country." In Fox's eye George III. will be Latinus, and Bonaparte, *Æneas*.

upon to support ministers in refusing<sup>32</sup> a frank, candid, and respectful offer of negotiation, and to countenance them in continuing the war. Now, I would put the question in another way. Suppose ministers had been inclined to adopt the line of conduct which they pursued in 1796 and 1797, and that to-night, instead of a question on a war-address, it had been an address to his Majesty to thank him for accepting the overture, and for opening a negotiation to treat for peace: I ask the gentleman opposite—I appeal to the whole 558 representatives of the people—to lay their hands upon their hearts, and to say whether they would not have cordially voted for such an address? Would they, or would they not? Yes, Sir, if the address had breathed a spirit of peace your benches would have resounded with rejoicings, and with praises of a measure that was likely to bring back the blessings of tranquillity. On the present occasion, then, I ask for the vote of none but those who, in the secret confession of their conscience, admit, at this instant while they hear me, that they would have cheerfully and heartily voted with the minister for an address directly the reverse of this. If every such gentleman were to vote with me, I should be this night in the greatest majority that ever I had the honor to vote with in this House.

36 Sir, we have heard to-night a great many most acrimonious° invectives against Bonaparte, against the whole course of his conduct, and against the unprincipled man-

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<sup>32</sup> Parliament did refuse by an overwhelming majority. The answer to Bonaparte's proposal was written by Grenville, and was in Lord Rosebery's opinion a specimen of "fine untutored insolence." See *Rosebery's Pitt*, page 143.

ner in which he seized upon the reins of government. I will not make his defense — I think all this sort of invective, which is used only to inflame the passions of this House and of the country, exceeding ill-timed and very impolitic — but I say I will not make his defense. I am not sufficiently in possession of materials upon which to form an opinion on the character and conduct of this extraordinary man. Upon his arrival in France he found the government in a very unsettled state, and the whole affairs of the republic deranged, crippled, and involved. He thought it necessary to reform the government; and he did reform it, just in the way in which a military man may be expected to carry on a reform — he seized on the whole authority to himself. It will not be expected from me that I should either approve or apologize for such an act. I am certainly not for reforming governments by such expedients; but how this House can be so violently indignant at the idea of military despotism is, I own, a little singular, when I see the composure with which they can observe it nearer home; nay, when I see them regard it as a frame of government most peculiarly suited to the exercise of free opinion on a subject the most important of any that can engage the attention of a people. Was it not the system<sup>33</sup> that was so happily and so advantageously established of late all over Ireland; and which, even now, the government may, at its pleasure, proclaim over the whole of that kingdom? Are not the persons and property of the people left in many districts at this moment to the entire will of military commanders? And is not this held out as peculiarly proper and advantageous at a time when

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<sup>33</sup> Martial law.

the people of Ireland are free, and with unbiased judgment, to discuss the most interesting question of a legislative union? <sup>34</sup> Notwithstanding the existence of martial law, so far do we think Ireland from being enslaved, that we think it precisely the period and the circumstances under which she may best declare her free opinion! Now really, Sir, I cannot think that gentlemen who talk in this way about Ireland can, with a good grace, rail at military despotism in France.

37 But, it seems, "Bonaparte has broken his oaths. He has violated his oath of fidelity to the constitution of the year 3." Sir, I am not one of those who think that any such oaths ought ever to be exacted. They are seldom or ever of any effect; and I am not for sporting with a thing so sacred as an oath. I think it would be good to lay aside all such oaths. Who ever heard that, in revolutions, the oath of fidelity to the former government was ever regarded; or even when violated, that it was imputed to the persons as a crime? In times of revolution, men who take up arms are called rebels—if they fail, they are adjudged to be traitors. But who ever heard before of their being perjured?

38 "Ah! but Bonaparte has declared it as his opinion, that the two governments of Great Britain and of France cannot exist together. After the treaty of Campo Formio <sup>35</sup> he sent two confidential persons, Berthier and

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<sup>34</sup> The Union of England and Ireland, July 2, 1800.

<sup>35</sup> Between Napoleon and Francis II. of Austria, 1797. Austria ceded her Belgian provinces to France, and engaged to use her influence to have the Empire accept the principle of the Rhine boundary. In return, France ceded her the Republic of Venice. By this treaty Great Britain was left alone in her contest with France. Great Britain soon made overtures, negotiations were opened, ended in failure. Lord Malmsbury was given four and twenty hours to return to his court to ask for the powers which he had declared he did not have. He went, but not to return.



Monge, to the Directory to say so in his name." Well, and what is there in this absurd and puerile assertion, if it was ever made? Has not the right honorable gentleman, in this House, said the same thing? In this, at least, they resemble one another. They have both made use of this assertion; and I believe that these two illustrious persons are the only two on earth who think it.

39 Are we still, as we happen to be successful on the one side or other, to bring up these impotent accusations, insults, and provocations, against each other; and only when we are beaten and unfortunate to think of treating? Oh! pity the condition of man, gracious God! and save us from such a system of malevolence, in which all our old and venerated prejudices are to be done away, and by which we are to be taught to consider war as the natural state of man, and peace but as a dangerous and difficult extremity?

40 Sir, this temper must be corrected. It is a diabolical spirit, and would lead to interminable war. Our history is full of instances that where we have overlooked a proffered occasion to treat, we have uniformly suffered by delay. At what time did we ever profit by obstinately persevering in war?

41 "It is not the interest of Bonaparte," it seems, "sincerely to enter into a negotiation, or, if he should even make peace, sincerely to keep it." But how are we to decide upon his sincerity? By refusing to treat with him? Surely, if we mean to discover his sincerity, we ought to hear the propositions which he desires to make. "But peace would be unfriendly to his system of military despotism." Sir, I hear a great deal about the short-lived nature of military despotism. I wish the history of the world would bear gentlemen out in this

description of military despotism. Was not the government erected by Augustus Cæsar a military despotism? and yet it endured for 600 or 700 years. Military despotism, unfortunately, is too likely in its nature to be permanent, and it is not true that it depends on the life of the first usurper. Though half the Roman emperors were murdered, yet the military despotism went on; and so it would be, I fear, in France.

42 But, Sir, if we are to reason on the fact, I should think that it is the interest of Bonaparte to make peace. A lover of military glory, as that general must necessarily be, may he not think that his measure of glory is full—that it may be tarnished by a reverse of fortune, and can hardly be increased by any new laurels? He must feel that, in the situation to which he is now raised, he can no longer depend on his own fortune, his own genius, and his own talents, for a continuance of his success; he must be under the necessity of employing other generals, whose misconduct or incapacity might endanger his power, or whose triumphs even might affect the interest which he holds in the opinion of the French. Peace, then, would secure to him what he has achieved, and fix the inconstancy of fortune. But this will not be his only motive. He must see that France also requires a respite—a breathing interval to recruit her wasted strength. To procure her this respite would be, perhaps, the attainment of more solid glory, as well as the means of acquiring more solid power, than anything which he can hope to gain from arms and from the proudest triumphs. May he not then be zealous to gain this fame, the only species of fame, perhaps, that is worth acquiring? Nay, granting that his soul may still burn with the thirst of military exploits, is it not likely that he

is earnestly disposed to yield to the feelings of the French people, and to consolidate his power by consulting their interests? I have a right to argue in this way, when suppositions of his insincerity are reasoned upon on the other side.

43 Sir, these aspersions are, in truth, always idle, and even mischievous. I have been too long accustomed to hear imputations and calumnies thrown out upon great and honorable characters to be much influenced by them. My learned friend has paid this night a most just, deserved, and honorable tribute of applause to the memory of that great and unparalleled character who has been so recently lost to the world. I must, like him, beg leave to dwell a moment on the venerable George Washington, though I know that it is impossible for me to bestow anything like adequate praise on a character which gave us, more than any other human being, the example of a perfect man; yet, good, great, and unexampled as General Washington was, I can remember the time when he was not better spoken of in this House than Bonaparte is now. The right honorable gentleman who opened this debate (Mr. Dundas)<sup>36</sup> may remember in what terms of disdain, of virulence, and even of contempt, General Washington was spoken of by gentlemen on that side of the House. Does he not recollect with what marks of indignation any member was stigmatized as an enemy to his country who mentioned with common respect the name of General Washington?<sup>37</sup> If a nego-

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<sup>36</sup> Why does Fox call Dundas to bear witness?

<sup>37</sup> "Where can the wearied eye repose  
When gazing on the great;  
Where neither guilty glory glows,  
Or perishable state?"

tiation had then been proposed to be opened with that great man, what would have been said? "Would you treat with a rebel, a traitor! What an example would you not give by such an act!" I do not know whether the right honorable gentleman may not yet possess some of his old prejudices on the subject. I hope not. I hope by this time we are all convinced that a republican government, like that of America, may exist without danger or injury to social order or to established monarchies. They have happily shown that they can maintain the relations of peace and amity with other states; they have shown, too, that they are alive to the feelings of honor; but they do not lose sight of plain good sense and discretion. They have not refused to negotiate with the French, and they have accordingly the hopes of a speedy termination of every difference. We cry up their conduct, but we do not imitate it.

44 My honorable friend (Mr. Whitbread) has been censured for an opinion which he gave, and I think justly, that the change of property in France since the revolution must form an almost insurmountable barrier to the return of the ancient proprietors. "No such thing," says the right honorable gentleman; "nothing can be more easy. Property is depreciated to such a degree, that the purchasers would easily be brought to restore the estates." I very much differ with him in this idea. It is the character of every such convulsion as that which

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Yes, one; the first, the last, the best,  
The Cincinnatus of the West,

Whom envy dared not hate,  
Bequeathed the name of Washington  
To make men blush there is but one."

— *Byron*.

has ravaged France, that an infinite and indescribable load of misery is inflicted upon private families. The heart sickens at the recital of the sorrows which it engenders. No revolution implied, though it may have occasioned, a total change of property. The restoration of the Bourbons does imply it; and there is the difference. There is no doubt but that if the noble families had foreseen the duration and the extent of the evils which were to fall upon their heads, they would have taken a very different line of conduct. But they unfortunately flew from their country.<sup>38</sup> The king and his advisers sought foreign aid. A confederacy was formed to restore them by military force; and as a means of resisting this combination, the estates of the fugitives were confiscated and sold. However compassion may deplore the case, it cannot be said that the thing is unprecedented. The people have always resorted to such means of defense. Now the question is, how this property is to be got out of their hands? If it be true, as I have heard, that the purchasers of national and forfeited estates amount to 1,500,000 persons, I see no hopes of their being forced to deliver up their property; nor do I even know that they ought. I question the policy, even if the thing were practicable; but I assert that such a body of new proprietors forms an insurmountable barrier to the restoration of the ancient order of things. Never was a revolution consolidated by a pledge so strong.

45 When the right honorable gentleman speaks of the extraordinary successes of the last campaign, he does not mention the horrors by which some of those successes

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<sup>38</sup> Became "emigrants."

were accompanied. Naples, for instance, has been, among others, what is called "delivered;" and yet, if I am rightly informed, it has been stained and polluted by murders so ferocious, and by cruelties of every kind so abhorrent, that the heart shudders at the recital. It has been said, not only that the miserable victims of the rage and brutality of the fanatics were savagely murdered, but that, in many instances, their flesh was eaten and devoured by the cannibals who are the advocates and the instruments of social order! Nay, England is not totally exempt from reproach, if the rumors which are circulated be true. I will mention a fact to give ministers the opportunity, if it be false, of wiping away the stain that it must otherwise fix on the British name. It is said that a party of the republican inhabitants of Naples took shelter in the fortress of the Castel de Uova. They were besieged by a detachment from the royal army, to whom they refused to surrender; but demanded that a British officer should be brought forward, and to him they capitulated. They made terms with him under the sanction of the British name. It was agreed that their persons and property should be safe, and that they should be conveyed to Toulon. They were accordingly put on board a vessel; but before they sailed their property was confiscated, numbers of them taken out, thrown into dungeons, and some of them, I understand, notwithstanding the British guarantee, actually executed.

**46** Where then, Sir, is this war, which on every side is pregnant with such horrors, to be carried? Where is it to stop? Not till you establish the House of Bourbon! And this you cherish the hope of doing, because you have had a successful campaign. Why, Sir, before this



you have had a successful campaign. The situation of the allies, with all they have gained, is surely not to be compared now to what it was when you had taken Valenciennes, Quesnoy, Condé, etc., which induced some gentlemen in this House to prepare yourselves for a march to Paris. With all that you have gained, you surely will not say that the prospect is brighter now than it was then. What have you gained but the recovery of a part of what you before lost? One campaign is successful to you — another to them; and in this way, animated by the vindictive passions of revenge, hatred, and rancor, which are infinitely more flagitious even than those of ambition and the thirst of power, you may go on forever; as, with such black incentives, I see no end to human misery. And all this without an intelligible motive, all this because you may gain a better peace a year or two hence! So that we are called upon to go on merely as a speculation. We must keep Bonaparte for some time longer at war, as a state of probation. Gracious God, Sir, is war a state of probation? Is peace a rash system? Is it dangerous for nations to live in amity with each other? Is your vigilance, your policy, your common powers of observation, to be extinguished by putting an end to the horrors of war? Cannot this state of probation be as well undergone without adding to the catalogue of human sufferings? “But we must pause!” What! must the bowels of Great Britain be torn out — her best blood be spilt — her treasure wasted — that you may make an experiment?

47 Put yourselves — oh! that you would put yourselves — in the field of battle, and learn to judge of the sort of horrors that you excite. In former wars a man might

at least have some feeling, some interest, that served to balance in his mind the impressions which a scene of carnage and of death must inflict. If a man had been present at the battle of Blenheim,<sup>39</sup> for instance, and had inquired the motive of the battle, there was not a soldier engaged who could not have satisfied his curiosity, and even perhaps allayed his feelings—they were fighting to repress the uncontrolled ambition of the grand monarch. But if a man were present now at a field of slaughter, and were to inquire for what they were fighting—“Fighting!” would be the answer; “they are not fighting, they are pausing.” “Why is that man expiring? Why is that other writhing with agony? What means this implacable fury?” The answer must be, “You are quite wrong, Sir; you deceive yourself—they are not fighting—do not disturb them—they are merely pausing!—this man is not expiring with agony—that man is not dead—he is only pausing! Lord help you, Sir! they are not angry with one another; they have now no cause of quarrel—but their country thinks that there should be a pause. All that you see, Sir, is nothing like fighting—there is no harm, nor cruelty, nor bloodshed in it whatever—it is nothing more than a *political pause*!—it is merely to try an experiment—to see whether Bonaparte will not behave himself better than heretofore; and in the meantime we have agreed to a pause, in pure friendship!” And is this the way, Sir, that you are to show yourselves the advocates of order? You take up a system calculated to uncivilize the world, to destroy order, to trample on religion, to stifle in the

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<sup>39</sup> In 1704, Marlborough, commanding the allied army of English, Dutch, and Austrians, beat the French and Bavarians.

heart, not merely the generosity of noble sentiment, but the affections of social nature; and in the prosecution of this system you spread terror and devastation all around you.

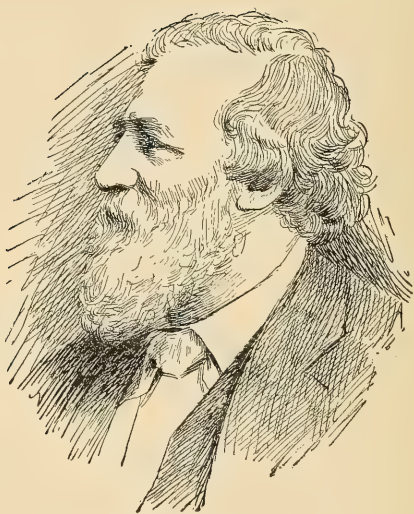
48 Sir, I have done. I have told you my opinion. I think you ought to have given a civil, clear, and explicit answer to the overture which was fairly and handsomely made you. If you were desirous that the negotiation should have included all your allies, as the means of bringing about a general peace, you should have told Bonaparte so; but I believe you were afraid of his agreeing to the proposal. You took that method before. "Ay, but," you say, "the people were anxious for peace in 1797." I say they are friends to peace now; and I am confident that you will one day own it. Believe me, they are friends to peace; although, by the laws which you have made restraining the expression of the sense of the people, public opinion cannot now be heard as loudly and unequivocally as heretofore. But I will not go into the internal state of this country. It is too afflicting to the heart to see the strides which have been made, by means of and under the miserable pretext of this war, against liberty of every kind, both of speech and of writing; and to observe in another kingdom<sup>40</sup> the rapid approaches to that military despotism which we affect to make an argument against peace. I know, Sir, that public opinion, if it could be collected, would be for peace, as much now as in 1797, and I know that it is only by public opinion — not by a sense of their duty — not by the inclination of their minds — that ministers

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<sup>40</sup> Ireland.

will be brought, if ever, to give us peace. I conclude, Sir, with repeating what I said before; I ask for no gentleman's vote who would have reprobated the compliance of ministers with the proposition of the French government; I ask for no gentleman's support to-night who would have voted against ministers, if they had come down and proposed to enter into a negotiation with the French; but I have a right to ask—I know that, in honor, in consistency, in conscience, I have a right to expect the vote of every gentleman who would have voted with ministers in an address to his Majesty diametrically opposite to the motion of this night.





ROBERT BROWNING.



## ROBERT BROWNING.

1812-1889.

"IN the works of Browning and Tennyson, we see the breadth of culture, the spirit of inquiry, the wrestling of beliefs, and the introspective habits of the latter part of the nineteenth century."—*Painter*.

Some of his principal works are *Pauline*, *Paracelsus*, *Sordello*, *Pippa Passes*, *Saul*, *A Blot O' the Scutcheon*, *The Ring and the Book*.

A few of the oftenest read shorter poems are *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, *By the Fireside*, *Andrea Del Sarto*, *My Last Duchess*, *The Flight of the Duchess*, *The Last Ride Together*, *Abt Vogler*, *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, *How They Carried the Good News from Ghent to Aix*.

More has been written both for and against the style of Robert Browning than of any other author in poetry or prose of the nineteenth century. One need not wear the uniform of either force, but the reader who does not know what there is in some of Browning's minor poems to stir the nobler currents of his soul, to pitch his imagination to a higher flight, to place pictures of rare beauty before his eyes, is missing something substantial as he goes along.



# Saul<sup>1</sup>

## I.

SAID Abner, "At last thou<sup>2</sup> art come! Ere I tell, ere  
thou speak,  
Kiss my cheek, wish me well!" Then I<sup>2</sup> wished it, and  
did kiss his cheek.  
And he, "Since the King, O my friend, for thy counte-  
nance sent,  
Neither drunken nor eaten have we; nor until from his  
tent  
Thou return with the joyful assurance the King liveth  
yet, 5  
Shall our lip with the honey be bright, with the water  
be wet.  
For out of the black mid-tent's silence, a space of three  
days,  
Not a sound hath escaped to thy servants, of prayer nor  
of praise,  
To betoken that Saul and the Spirit have ended their  
strife,  
And that, faint in his triumph, the monarch sinks back  
upon life. 10

## II.

"Yet now my heart leaps, O beloved! God's child with  
his dew  
On thy gracious gold hair, and those lilies still living  
and blue

---

<sup>1</sup> Read 1 Samuel 16: 14-23; 18: 10; and 19: 9.

<sup>2</sup> David.

Just broken to twine round thy harpstrings, as if no wild  
heat  
Were now raging to torture the desert!"

## III.

Then I as was meet,  
Knelt down to the God of my fathers, and rose on my  
feet, 15  
And ran o'er the sand burnt to powder. The tent was  
unlooped;  
I pulled up the spear that obstructed, and under I  
stooped;  
Hands and knees on the slippery grass-patch, all withered  
and gone,  
That extends to the second enclosure, I groped my way on  
Till I felt where the foldskirts fly open. Then once more  
I prayed,  
And opened the foldskirts and entered, and was not afraid  
But spoke, "Here is David, thy servant!" And no voice  
replied.  
At the first I saw naught but the blackness; but soon I  
descried  
A something more black than the blackness — the vast,  
the upright  
Main prop which sustains the pavilion: and slow into  
sight 25  
Grew a figure against it, gigantic and blackest of all.  
Then a sunbeam, that burst through the tent-roof, showed  
Saul.

## IV.

He stood as erect as that tent-prop, both arms stretched  
out wide

On the great cross-support in the center, that goes to  
 each side;  
 He relaxed not a muscle, but hung there as, caught in  
 his pangs  
 And waiting his change, the king serpent all heavily  
 hangs,  
 Far away from his kind, in the pine, till deliverance come  
 With the spring-time,—so agonized Saul, drear and  
 stark, blind and dumb.

## V.

Then I tuned my harp—took off the lilies<sup>3</sup> we twine  
 round its chords  
 Lest they snap 'neath the stress of the noontide—those  
 sunbeams like swords! 35  
 And I first played the tune all our sheep know, as, one  
 after one,  
 So docile they come to the pen-door till folding be done.  
 They are white, and untorn by the bushes, for lo, they  
 have fed  
 Where the long grasses stifle the water within the  
 stream's bed;  
 And now one after one seeks its lodging, as star follows  
 star 40  
 Into eve and the blue far above us,—so blue and so far!

## VI.

—Then the tune, for which quails on the cornland will  
 each leave his mate

---

<sup>3</sup> Care for the meter, the cesura is after "lilies."

To fly after the player; then, what makes the crickets  
 elate  
 Till for boldness they fight one another: and then, what  
 has weight  
 To set the quick jerboa a-musing outside his sand  
 house — 45  
 There are none such as he for a wonder, half bird and  
 half mouse!  
 God made all the creatures and gave them our love and  
 our fear,  
 To give sign, we and they are his children, one family  
 here.

## VII.

Then I played the help-tune of our reapers, their wine-  
 song; when hand  
 Grasps at hand, eye lights eye in good friendship, and  
 great hearts expand 50  
 And grow one in the sense of this world's life.— And  
 then, the last song,  
 When the dead man is praised on his journey — “ Bear,<sup>4</sup>  
 bear him along,  
 With his few faults shut up like dead flowerets! Are  
 balm seeds not here  
 To console us? The land has none left such as he on  
 the bier.  
 Oh, would we might keep thee, my brother! ”—And then,  
 the glad chant 55  
 Of the marriage,— first go the young maidens, next, she  
 whom we vaunt

---

<sup>4</sup> Song begins.



As the beauty, the pride of our dwelling.— And then, the  
great march

Wherein man runs to man to assist him and buttress an  
arch

Naught can break; who shall harm them, our friends? —

Then, the chorus intoned

As the Levites go up to the altar in glory enthroned. <sup>60</sup>

But I stopped here: for here in the darkness Saul groaned.

#### VIII.

And I paused, held my breath in such silence, and lis-  
tened apart;

And the tent shook, for mighty Saul shuddered: and  
sparkles <sup>5</sup> 'gan dart

From the jewels that woke in his turban at once with a  
start,

All its lordly male-sapphires, and rubies courageous at  
heart.

So the head: but the body still moved not, still hung  
there erect.

And I bent once again to my playing, pursued it un-  
checked,

As I sang,—<sup>6</sup>

#### IX.

“ Oh, our manhood's prime vigor! No spirit feels waste,  
Not a muscle is stopped in its playing nor sinew unbraced.  
Oh, the wild joys of living! the leaping from rock up to  
rock,

---

<sup>5</sup> Perhaps the turban came into that ray of sunlight.

<sup>6</sup> Sings now with his playing, a glad song about *life*, an antidote to Saul's melancholy. Cails to witness father, mother, brethren, friends.

The strong rending of boughs from the fir-tree, the cool  
silver shock  
Of the plunge in a pool's living water, the hunt of the  
bear,  
And the sultriness showing the lion is couched in his lair.  
And the meal, the rich dates yellowed over with gold  
dust, divine,  
And the locust-flesh steeped in the pitcher, the full  
draught of wine, 75  
And the sleep in the dried river-channel where bulrushes  
tell  
That the water was wont to go warbling so softly and  
well.  
How good is man's life, the mere living! how fit to em-  
ploy  
All the heart and the soul and the senses forever in joy!  
Hast thou loved the white locks of thy father, whose  
sword thou didst guard 80  
When he trusted thee forth with the armies, for glorious  
reward?  
Didst thou see the thin hands of thy mother, held up as  
men sung  
The low song of the nearly departed, and hear her faint  
tongue,  
Joining in while it could to the witness, 'Let one more  
attest,  
I have lived, seen God's hand through a lifetime, and all  
was for best!' 85  
Then they sung thro' their tears in strong triumph, not  
much, but the rest.  
And thy brothers, the help and the contest, the working  
whence grew

Such result as, from seething grape-bundles, the spirit  
 strained true:  
 And the friends of thy boyhood — that boyhood of wonder and hope,  
 Present promise and wealth of the future beyond the  
 eye's scope,—<sup>90</sup>  
 Till lo, thou art grown to a monarch; a people is thine;  
 And all gifts, which the world offers singly, on one head  
 combine!  
 On one head, all the beauty and strength, love and rage  
 (like the throe  
 That, a-work in the rock, helps its labor<sup>7</sup> and lets the  
 gold go)  
 High ambition and deeds which surpass it, fame crown-  
 ing them,—all  
 Brought to blaze on the head of one creature — King  
 Saul!<sup>95</sup>

## X.

And lo, with what leap of my spirit,— heart, hand, harp  
 and voice,  
 Each lifting Saul's name out of sorrow, each bidding  
 rejoice  
 Saul's fame in the light it was made for — as when, dare  
 I say,  
 The Lord's army, in rapture of service, strains through  
 its array,<sup>100</sup>  
 And upsoareth the cherubim-chariot — "Saul!" cried I,  
 and stopped,  
 And waited the thing that should follow. Then Saul,  
 who hung propped

---

<sup>7</sup> travail, brings forth the gold.

By the tent's cross-support in the center, was struck by  
his name.

Have ye seen when Spring's<sup>8</sup> arrowy summons goes  
right to the aim,

And some mountain, the last to withstand her, that held  
(he alone, 105

While the vale laughed in freedom and flowers) on a  
broad bust of stone

A year's snow bound about for a breastplate,—leaves  
grasp of the sheet?

Fold on fold all at once it crowds thunderously down to  
his feet,

And there fronts you, stark, black, but alive yet, your  
mountain of old,

With his rents, the successive bequeathings of ages un-  
told — 110

Yea, each harm got in fighting your battles, each furrow  
and scar

Of his head thrust 'twixt you and the tempest — all hail,  
there they are!

— Now again to be softened with verdure, again hold  
the nest

Of the dove, tempt the goat and its young to the green  
on his crest

For their food in the ardors of summer. One long  
shudder thrilled 115

All the tent till the very air tingled, then sank and was  
stilled

---

<sup>8</sup> As Spring's arrows pierce the snow on the mountain, so David's song and call find a way into Saul's consciousness. He was "aware," but there was a wide interval between his dark despair and the sunshine of hope.

At the King's self left standing before me, released and  
aware.

What was gone, what remained? All to traverse 'twixt  
hope and despair,

Death was past, life not come: so he waited. Awhile  
his right hand

Held the brow, helped the eyes left too vacant forthwith  
to remand 120

To their place what new objects should enter: 'twas Saul  
as before.

I looked up and dared gaze at those eyes, nor was hurt  
any more

Than by slow pallid sunsets in autumn, ye watch from  
the shore,

At their <sup>9</sup> sad level gaze o'er the ocean — a sun's slow  
decline <sup>10</sup>

Over hills which, resolved <sup>11</sup> in stern silence, o'erlap and  
entwine, 125

Base with base to knit strength more intensely: so, arm  
folded arm

O'er the chest whose slow heavings subsided.

XI.

What spell or what charm,

(For, awhile there was trouble within me), what next  
should I urge

To sustain him where song had restored him? — Song  
filled to the verge

---

<sup>9</sup> Sunsets.

<sup>10</sup> Object of watch.

<sup>11</sup> determined. fixed.

His cup with the wine of this life, pressing all that it  
 yields 130  
 Of mere fruitage, the strength and the beauty: beyond,  
 on what fields,  
 Glean a vintage more potent and perfect to brighten the  
 eye  
 And bring blood to the lip, and commend them the cup  
 they put by?  
 He saith, "It is good;" still he drinks not: he lets me  
 praise life,  
 Gives assent, yet would die for his own part. 135

## XII.

Then fancies grew rife  
 Which had come long ago on the pasture, when round  
 me the sheep  
 Fed in silence — above, the one eagle wheeled slow as  
 in sleep;  
 And I lay in my hollow and mused on the world that  
 might lie  
 'Neath his ken, though I saw but the strip 'twixt the  
 hill and the sky:  
 And I laughed — "Since my days are ordained to be  
 passed with my flocks, 140  
 Let me people at least, with my fancies, the plains and  
 the rocks,  
 Dream the life I am never to mix with, and image the  
 show  
 Of mankind as they live in those fashions I hardly shall  
 know!  
 Schemes of life, its best rules and right uses, the courage  
 that gains,



And the prudence that keeps what men strive for." And  
 now these old trains 145  
 Of vague thought came again; I grew surer; so, once  
 more the string  
 Of my harp made response to my spirit, as thus —

## XIII.

"Yea, my King,"

I began — "thou dost well in rejecting mere comforts  
 that spring  
 From the mere mortal life held in common by man and  
 by brute:  
 In our flesh grows the branch of this life, in our soul it  
 bears fruit. 150  
 Thou hast marked the slow rise of the tree,—how its  
 stem trembled first  
 Till it passed the kid's lip, the stag's antler; then safely  
 outburst  
 The fan-branches all round; and thou mindest when  
 these, too, in turn,  
 Broke-a-bloom and the palm-tree seemed perfect: yet  
 more was to learn,  
 E'en the good that comes in with the palm-fruit. Our  
 dates shall we slight, 155  
 When their juice brings a cure for all sorrow? or care  
 for the plight  
 Of the palm's self whose slow growth produced them?  
 Not so! stem and branch  
 Shall decay, nor be known <sup>12</sup> in their place, while the  
 palm-wine shall stanch

---

<sup>12</sup> "And the places that know them now shall know them no more."

Every wound of man's spirit in winter. I pour thee such  
wine.  
Leave the flesh to the fate it was fit for! the spirit be  
thine! 160  
By the spirit, when age shall o'ercome thee, thou still  
shalt enjoy  
More indeed, than at first when, unconscious, the life of  
a boy.  
Crush that life, and behold its wine running! Each deed  
thou hast done  
Dies, revives, goes to work in the world: until e'en as  
the sun  
Looking down on the earth, though clouds spoil him,  
though tempests efface, 165  
Can find nothing his own deed produced not, must every-  
where trace  
The results of his past summer-prime,— so, each ray of  
thy will,  
Every flash of thy passion and prowess, long over, shall  
thrill  
Thy whole people, the countless, with ardor, till they too  
give forth  
A like cheer to their sons, who in turn, fill the South and  
the North 170  
With the radiance thy deed <sup>13</sup> was the germ of. Carouse  
in the past!  
But the license of age has its limit: thou diest at last.  
As the lion when age dims his eyeball, the rose at her  
height,  
So with man — so his power and his beauty forever take  
flight.

---

<sup>13</sup> Line 63.

No!<sup>14</sup> Again a long draught of my soul-wine! Look  
forth o'er the years! 175  
Thou hast done now with eyes for the actual; begin with  
the seer's!  
Is Saul dead? In the depth of the vale make his tomb —  
bid arise  
A gray mountain of marble heaped four-square, till, built  
to the skies,  
Let it mark where the great First King slumbers: whose  
fame would ye know?  
Up above see the rock's naked face, where the record  
shall go, 180  
In great characters cut by the scribe,— Such<sup>15</sup> was Saul,  
so he did;  
With the sages directing the work, by the populace  
child,—  
For not half, they affirm, is comprised there! Which  
fault to amend,  
In the grove with his kind grows the cedar, whereon they  
shall spend  
(See, in tablets 'tis level before them) their praise, and  
record 185  
With the gold of the graver, Saul's story,— the states-  
man's great word  
Side by side with the poet's sweet comment. The river's  
a-wave  
With smooth paper-reeds grazing each other when  
prophet-winds rave:  
So the pen gives unborn generations their due and their  
part

---

<sup>14</sup> Dead, he yet lives.

<sup>15</sup> As recorded.

In thy being! Then, first of the mighty, thank God that  
thou art!" <sup>16</sup> 190

## XIV.

And behold while I sang <sup>17</sup> . . . but O Thou who didst  
grant me, that day,  
And, before it, not seldom hast granted thy help to essay, <sup>18</sup>  
Carry on and complete an adventure,— my shield and my  
sword,  
In that act where my soul was thy servant, thy word was  
my word,—  
Still be with me, who then at the summit of human en-  
deavor 195  
And scaling the highest, man's thought could, gazed  
hopeless as ever  
On the new stretch of heaven above me — till, mighty to  
save  
Just one lift of thy hand cleared that distance — God's  
throne from man's grave!  
Let me tell out my tale to its ending — my voice to my  
heart  
Which can scarce dare believe in what marvels last night  
I took part, 200  
As this morning I gather the fragments, alone with my  
sheep,  
And still fear lest the terrible glory vanish like sleep!  
For I wake in the gray dewy covert, while Hebron up-  
heaves

---

<sup>16</sup> That thou livest and shalt live.

<sup>17</sup> The story rests while David prays.

<sup>18</sup> In what previous "adventures"?

The dawn struggling with night on his shoulder,<sup>19</sup> and  
Kidron retrieves<sup>20</sup>

Slow the damage of yesterday's sunshine. 205

## XV.

I say then,— my song  
While I sang thus, assuring the monarch, and, ever more  
strong,  
Made a proffer of good to console him — he slowly re-  
sumed  
His old motions and habitudes kingly. The right hand  
replumed  
His black locks to their wonted composure, adjusted the  
swathes  
Of his turban, and see — the huge seat that his counte-  
nance bathes, 210  
He wipes off with the robe; and he girds now his loins  
as of yore,  
And feels slow for the armlets of price, with the clasp  
set before.  
He is Saul, ye remember in glory, ere error had bent  
The broad brow from the daily communion; <sup>21</sup> and still,  
though much spent <sup>22</sup>  
Be the life and the bearing that front you, the same, God  
did choose, 215  
To receive what <sup>23</sup> a man may waste, desecrate, never  
quite lose.  
So sank he along by the tent-prop till, stayed by the pile

<sup>19</sup> Day stands tiptoe on Hebron's shoulder.

<sup>20</sup> The brook slowly regains the loss from evaporation.

<sup>21</sup> With God.

<sup>22</sup> weakened, unstrung.

<sup>23</sup> " 'Tis the divinity that stirs within."—*Cato*, Act V, Scene 1.

Of his armor and war-cloak and garments, he leaned  
there awhile,  
And sat out my singing,—one arm round the tent-prop  
to raise  
His bent head, and the other hung slack — till I touched  
on the praise 220  
I foresaw from all men in all time, to the man patient  
there;  
And thus ended, the harp falling forward. Then first I  
was 'ware  
That he sat, as I say, with my head just above his vast  
knees  
Which were thrust out on each side around me, like oak  
roots which please  
To encircle a lamb when it slumbers. I looked up to  
know 225  
If the best I could do had brought solace: he spoke not,  
but slow  
Lifted up the hand slack at his side, till he laid it with  
care  
Soft and grave, but in mild settled will, on my brow:  
thro' my hair  
The large fingers were pushed, and he bent back my head,  
with kind power —  
All my face back, intent to peruse <sup>24</sup> it, as men do a  
flower. 230  
Thus held he me there with his great eyes that scruti-  
nized mine —  
And oh, all my heart how it loved him! but where was  
the sign?

---

<sup>24</sup> "He falls to such perusal of my face  
As he would draw it."

— *Hamlet, Act II, Scene 1, line 90.*



I yearned —“ Could I help thee, my father, inventing a  
 bliss,  
 I would add, to that life of the past, both the future and  
 this;  
 I would give thee new life altogether, as good, ages  
 hence, 235  
 As this moment,— had love but the warrant, love’s heart  
 to dispense! ” <sup>25</sup>

## XVI.

Then the truth came upon me. No harp more <sup>26</sup> — no  
 song more! outbroke —

## XVII.

“ I have gone the whole round of creation: I saw and I  
 spoke;  
 I, a work of God’s hand for that purpose,<sup>27</sup> received in  
 my brain  
 And pronounced on the rest of his handwork — returned  
 him again 240  
 His creation’s <sup>28</sup> approval or censure: I spoke as I saw:  
 I report, as a man may of God’s work — all’s love, yet  
 all’s law.  
 Now I lay down the judgeship he lent me. Each faculty  
 tasked  
 To perceive him, has gained an abyss,<sup>o</sup> where a dew drop  
 was asked.  
 Have I knowledge? confounded it shrivels at Wisdom  
 laid bare. 245

---

<sup>25</sup> If love had permission to pour out its heart.

<sup>26</sup> Ceased playing and singing.

<sup>27</sup> To make report.

<sup>28</sup> The objective possessive.

Have I forethought? how purblind, how blank, to the  
Infinite Care!

Do I task any faculty highest, to imagine success?

I but open my eyes,—and perfection, no more and no  
less,

In the kind I imagined, full fronts me, and God is seen  
God

In the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in the soul and the  
clod. 250

And thus looking within and around me, I ever renew  
(With that stoop of the soul which in bending upraises  
it too)

The submission of man's nothing-perfect to God's all-  
complete,

As by each new obeisance in spirit, I climb to his feet.

Yet with all this abounding experience, this deity  
known, 255

I shall dare to discover some province, some gift of my  
own.

There's a faculty pleasant to exercise, hard to hoodwink,<sup>o</sup>  
I am fain to keep still in abeyance<sup>o</sup> (I laugh as I think)  
Lest, insisting to claim and parade in it, wot ye, I worst  
E'en the Giver in one gift.—Behold, I could love if I  
durst! 260

But I sink the pretension as fearing a man may o'ertake  
God's own speed in the one way of love: I abstain for  
love's sake. <sup>29</sup>

—What, my soul? see thus far and no farther? when  
doors great and small,

Nine and ninety flew ope at our touch, should the hun-  
dredth appall?

---

<sup>29</sup> For fear I may surpass God! But this mood instantly changes.

In the least things have faith, yet distrust in the greatest  
of all? 265

Do I find love so full in my nature, God's ultimate gift,  
That I doubt his own love can compete with it? Here,  
the parts shift?

Here, the creature surpass the Creator,—the end, what  
began?

Would I fain in my impotent yearning do all for this man,  
And dare doubt he alone shall not help him, who yet  
alone can? 270

Would it ever have entered my mind, the bare will, much  
less power,

To bestow on this Saul what I sang of, the marvelous  
dower

Of the life he was gifted and filled with? to make such a  
soul,

Such a body, and then such an earth for insphering the  
whole?

And doth it not enter my mind <sup>30</sup> (as my warm tears  
attest) 275

These good things being given, to go on, and give one  
more, the best?

Ay, to save and redeem and restore him, maintain at the  
height

This perfection,—succeed, with life's dayspring, death's  
minute of night?

Interpose at the difficult minute, snatch Saul the mistake,  
Saul the failure, the ruin he seems now,—and bid him  
awake 280

From the dream, the probation, the prelude, to find him-  
self set

---

<sup>30</sup> It does; therefore, will God do it?

Clear and safe in new light and new life,— a new harmony yet  
 To be run and continued, and ended — who knows? —  
 or endure!  
 The man taught enough by life's dream, of the rest to  
 make sure;  
 By the pain-throb, triumphantly winning intensified  
 bliss, 285  
 And the next world's reward and repose, by the struggles  
 in this.

## XVIII.

“ I believe it! ’Tis thou, God, that givest, ’tis I who  
 receive:  
 In the first is the last, in thy will is my power to believe.  
 All's one gift: thou canst grant it moreover, as prompt  
 to my prayer,  
 As I breathe out this breath, as I open these arms to the  
 air. 290  
 From thy will, stream the worlds, life and nature, thy  
 dread Sabaoth.  
 I will? — the mere atoms despise me! <sup>31</sup> Why am I not  
 loth  
 To look that, even that in the face too? Why is it I dare  
 Think but lightly of such impuissance<sup>o</sup>? What stops my  
 despair?  
 This;—’tis not what man Does which exalts him, but  
 what man would do! <sup>32</sup> 295  
 See the King — I would help him, but cannot, the wishes  
 fall through.

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<sup>31</sup> My “ impuissance,” weakness.

<sup>32</sup> Not my feebleness in action, but my strength of desire gives my measure.

Could I wrestle to raise him from sorrow, grow poor to enrich,

To fill up his life, starve my own out, I would — knowing which,

I know that my service is perfect.<sup>33</sup> Oh, speak through me now!

Would I suffer for him that I love? So wouldst thou <sup>34</sup>  
— so wilt thou! 300

So shall crown thee the topmost, ineffablest, uttermost crown —

And thy love fill infinitude wholly, nor leave up nor down  
One spot for the creature to stand in! It is by no breath,  
Turn of eye, wave of hand, that salvation joins issue with death!

As thy love is discovered almighty, almighty be proved <sup>305</sup>  
Thy power, that exists with and for it, of being beloved!  
He who did most, shall bear most; the strongest shall stand the most weak.

'Tis the weakness in strength, that I cry for! my flesh, that I seek

In the Godhead! I seek and I find it. O Saul, it shall be  
A Face like my face that receives thee; a Man like  
to me, 310

Thou shalt love and be loved by, forever: a Hand like this hand

Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee! See the Christ stand!"

#### XIX.

I know not too well how I found my way home in the night.

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<sup>33</sup> Unselfishness is the test.

<sup>34</sup> The great discovery.

There were witnesses, cohorts, about me, to left and  
to right,  
Angels, powers, the unuttered, unseen, the alive, the  
aware: 315  
I repressed, I got through them as hardly, as strugglingly  
there,  
As a runner beset by the populace famished for news —  
Life or death. The whole earth was awakened, hell loosed  
with her crews;  
And the stars of night beat with emotion, and tingled and  
shot  
Out in fire the strong pain of pent knowledge; but I  
fainted not, 320  
For the Hand still impelled me at once and supported,  
suppressed  
All the tumult, and quenched it with quiet, and holy  
behest,  
Till the rapture was shut in itself, and the earth sank to  
rest.  
Anon at the dawn, all that trouble had withered from  
earth —  
Not so much,<sup>35</sup> but I saw it die out in the day's tender  
birth; 325  
In the gathered intensity brought to the gray of the hills;  
In the shuddering forests' held breath; in the sudden  
wind-thrills;  
In the startled wild beasts that bore oft, each with eye  
sidling still  
Though averted with wonder and dread; in the birds stiff  
and chill

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<sup>35</sup> A shade of it had lasted.



That rose heavily, as I approached them, made stupid  
with awe: 330

E'en the serpent that slid away silent,— he felt the new  
law.

The same stared in the white humid faces upturned by  
the flowers;

The same worked in the heart of the cedar and moved  
the vine bowers:

And the little brooks witnessing murmured, persistent  
and low,

With their obstinate, all but hushed voices —“ E'en so,  
it is so!” 335



CHARLES LAMB

## CHARLES LAMB.

1775-1833.

A BIOGRAPHICAL sketch of the inimitable Lamb is furnished us by his own artist hand; "autobiographical," I should say; and autobiography, as some brave punster once defined the word, is what "biography ought to be."

Charles Lamb, born in the Inner Temple, 10th of February, 1775, educated in Christ's Hospital; afterward a clerk in the Accountant's Office, East India House; pensioned off from that service 1825, after 33 years' service; is now a gentleman at large; can remember few specialities of his life worth noting, except that he once caught a swallow flying (*teste sua manu*); below the middle stature; cast of face slightly Jewish, with no Judaic tinge in his complexional religion; stammers abominably, and is therefore more apt to discharge his occasional conversation in a quaint aphorism or a poor quibble, than in set and edifying speeches; has consequently been libeled as a person always aiming at wit, which, as he told a dull fellow that charged him with it, is at least as good as aiming at dullness. A small eater, but not drinker; confesses a partiality for the production of the juniper berry; was a fierce smoker of tobacco, but may be resembled to a volcano burnt out, emitting only now and then a casual puff. Has been guilty of obtruding upon the public a tale in prose, called *Rosamund Gray*; a dramatic sketch, entitled *John Woodvil*; a *Farewell Ode to Tobacco*; with sundry other poems and light prose matter, collected

in two slight crown octavos, and pompously christened *His Works*, though in fact they were his recreations, and his true works may be found on the shelves of Leadenhall Street, filling some hundred folios. He is also the true "Elia," whose essays are extant in a little volume, published a year or two since, and rather better known from that name without a meaning, than from anything he has done or can hope to do in his own. He also was the first to draw attention to the old English dramatists in a work called *Specimens of Dramatic Writers Who Lived about the Time of Shakespeare*, published about fifteen years since. In short, all his merits and demerits to set forth would take to the end of Mr. Upcott's book, and then not be told truly.

He died — 18 —, much lamented.

Witness his hand,

April 18, 1827.

Charles Lamb.

In Coleridge's *Table Talk* is the prediction: "The place which Lamb holds and will continue to hold in English literature seems less liable to interruption than that of any other writer of our day."

Coleridge's look ahead did not deceive him.

# The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple

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I<sup>1</sup> WAS born, and passed the first seven years of my life, in the temple. Its church, its halls, its gardens, its fountain, its river, I had almost said,—for in those young years, what was this king of rivers to me but a stream that watered our pleasant places?—these are of the oldest recollections. I repeat, to this day, no verses to myself more frequently, or with kindlier emotion, than those of Spenser,<sup>2</sup> where he speaks of this spot:—

There when they came, whereas those bricky towers,  
The which on Themmes brode aged back doth ride,  
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,  
There whylome wont the Templer knights to bide,  
Till they decayed through pride.

Indeed, it is the most elegant<sup>o</sup> spot in the metropolis. What a transition for a countryman visiting London for the first time—the passing from the crowded Strand or Fleet Street, by unexpected avenues, into its magnificent ample squares, its classic green recesses! What a cheerful, liberal<sup>o</sup> look hath that portion of it, which from three sides, overlooks the greater garden: that goodly pile

Of building strong, albeit of Paper hight,

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<sup>1</sup> We learn much about “St. Charles,” as Thackeray called him, in this essay; something, in every one.

<sup>2</sup> The author of *The Faerie Queene*, the greatest poetic allegory in English, lived in “the spacious times of great Elizabeth.”

confronting with massy contrast, the lighter, older, more fantastically shrouded one, named of Harcourt, with the cheerful Crown-office Row (place of my kindly engendure<sup>o</sup>), right opposite the stately stream, which washes the garden-foot with her yet scarcely trade-polluted waters, and seems but just weaned from her Twickenham Naiads! a man would give something to have been born in such places. What a collegiate aspect has that fine Elizabethan hall, where the fountain plays, which I have made to rise and fall, how many times! to the astoundment of young urchins, my contemporaries, who, not being able to guess at its recondite<sup>o</sup> machinery, were almost tempted to hail the wondrous works as magic! What an antique air had the now almost effaced sundials, with their moral inscriptions, seeming coevals<sup>o</sup> with that Time which they measured, and to take their revelations of its flight immediately from heaven, holding correspondence with the fountain of light! How would the dark line steal imperceptibly on, watched by the eye of childhood, eager to detect its movement, never caught, nice as an evanescent<sup>o</sup> cloud, or the first arrest<sup>o</sup> of sleep!<sup>3</sup>

Ah! yet doth beauty like a dial-hand  
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived!

2 What a dead thing is a clock, with its ponderous embowelments of lead and brass, its pert or solemn dullness of communication, compared with the simple altar-like structure, and silent heart-language of the old dial! It stood as the garden god of Christian gardens. Why is it almost everywhere vanished? If its business-use be superseded<sup>o</sup> by more elaborate inventions, its moral uses,

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<sup>3</sup> Stopping of consciousness by sleep.



its beauty, might have pleaded for its continuance. It spoke of moderate labors, of pleasures not protracted after sunset, of temperance, and good hours. It was the primitive clock, the horologe<sup>4</sup> of the first world. Adam could scarce have missed it in Paradise. It was the measure appropriate for sweet plants and flowers to spring by, for the birds to apportion their silver warblings by, for flocks to pasture and be led to fold by. The shepherd "carved it out quaintly in the sun;" and, turning philosopher by the very occupation, provided it with mottoes more touching than tombstones. It was a pretty device of the gardener, recorded by Marvell,<sup>5</sup> who, in the days of artificial gardening, made a dial out of herbs and flowers. I must quote his verses a little higher up, for they are full, as all his serious poetry was, of a witty delicacy. They will not come in awkwardly, I hope, in a talk of fountains, and sundials. He is speaking of sweet garden scenes:—

What wondrous life is this I lead!  
 Ripe apples drop about my head.  
 The luscious clusters of the vine  
 Upon my mouth do crush their wine.  
 The nectarine and curious peach  
 Into my hands themselves do reach.  
 Stumbling on melons, as I pass,  
 Insnared with flowers, I fall on grass.  
 Meanwhile the mind from pleasure less  
 Withdraws into its happiness.  
 The mind, that ocean, where each kind

4

"The horologe of Eternity  
 Sayeth this incessantly,—  
 'Forever — never.'"

— *Longfellow*.

<sup>5</sup> An English poet — 1620–1678; at one time assistant Latin secretary to Milton.

Does straight its own resemblance find;  
Yet it creates, transcending these,  
Far other worlds, and other seas,  
Annihilating all that's made  
To a green thought in a green shade.  
Here at the fountain's sliding foot,  
Or at some fruit tree's mossy root,  
Casting the body's vest aside,  
My soul into the boughs does glide;  
There, like a bird, it sits and sings,  
Then whets and claps its silver wings,  
And, till prepared for longer flight,  
Waves in its plumes the various light.  
How well the skilful gardener drew,  
Of flowers and herbs, this dial new,  
Where, from above, the milder sun  
Does through a fragrant zodiac run  
And, as it works, the industrious bee  
Computes its time as well as we.  
How could such sweet and wholesome hours  
Be reckon'd, but with herbs and flowers?

3 The artificial fountains of the metropolis are, in like manner, fast vanishing. Most of them are dried up, or bricked over. Yet, where one is left, as in that little green nook behind the South-Sea House,<sup>6</sup> what a freshness it gives to the dreary pile! Four little winged marble boys used to play their virgin fancies, spouting out ever fresh streams from their innocent-wanton lips in the square of Lincoln's-inn, when I was no bigger than they were figured. They are gone, and the spring choked up. The fashion, they tell me is gone by, and these things are esteemed childish. Why not then gratify children, by letting them stand? Lawyers, I suppose, were children once. They are awakening images to them at least.

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<sup>6</sup> Lamb's essay, *The South-Sea House*, makes the reader think of Hawthorne's *The Custom House*.

Why must everything smack of man and mannish? Is the world all grown up? Is childhood dead? Or is there not in the bosoms of the wisest and the best some of the child's heart left, to respond to its earliest enchantments? The figures were grotesque. Are the stiff-wigged living figures, that still flutter and chatter about that area, less Gothic in appearance? or is the splutter of their hot rhetoric one half so refreshing and innocent as the little cool playful streams those exploded<sup>o</sup> cherubs uttered?

4 They have lately gothicized<sup>7</sup> the entrance to the Inner Temple-hall, and the library front; to assimilate them, I suppose, to the body of the hall, which they do not at all resemble. What is become of the winged horse that stood over the former? a stately arms! and who has removed those frescoes of the Virtues, which Italianized the end of the Paper Buildings? — my first hint of allegory! They must account to me for these things, which I miss so greatly.

5 The terrace is, indeed, left, which we used to call the parade; but the traces are passed away of the footsteps which made its pavement awful! It is become common and profane. The old benchers had it almost sacred to themselves, in the forepart of the day at least. They might not be sided or jostled. Their air and dress asserted the parade. You left wide spaces betwixt you, when you passed them. We walk on even terms with their successors. The roguish eye of J——ll, ever ready to be delivered of a jest, almost invites a stranger to vie<sup>o</sup> a repartee<sup>o</sup> with it. But what insolent familiar durst

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<sup>7</sup> made Gothic in its style.

have mated<sup>8</sup> Thomas Coventry? — whose person was a quadrate,<sup>9</sup> his step massy and elephantine, his face square as the lion's, his gate peremptory<sup>o</sup> and path-keeping, indivertible<sup>o</sup> from his way as a moving column, the scarecrow of his inferiors, the browbeater of equals and superiors, who made a solitude of children wherever he came, for they fled his insufferable presence, as they would have shunned an Elisha bear.<sup>10</sup> His growl<sup>11</sup> was as thunder in their ears, whether he spake to them in mirth or in rebuke, his invitatory<sup>o</sup> notes being, indeed, of all, the most repulsive and horrid. Clouds of snuff, aggravating the natural terrors of his speech, broke from each majestic nostril, darkening the air. He took it not by pinches, but a palmful at once, diving for it under the mighty flaps of his old-fashioned waistcoat pocket; his waistcoat red and angry, his coat dark rappee, tintured by dye original, and by adjuncts, with buttons of obsolete gold. And so he paced the terrace.

6 By his side a milder form was sometimes to be seen; the pensive gentility of Samuel Salt. They were coevals, and had nothing but that and their benchership in common. In politics Salt was a whig, and Coventry a stanch tory. Many a sarcastic growl did the latter cast out — for Coventry had a rough spinous<sup>12</sup> humor — at the political confederates of his associate, which rebounded from the gentle bosom of the latter like cannon-balls from wool. You could not ruffle Samuel Salt.

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<sup>8</sup> matched.

<sup>9</sup> four-square.

<sup>10</sup> One of the breed that wrought vengeance upon the mockers of Elijah.

<sup>11</sup> "A voice as deep as a thunder-growl." — *Hawthorne*.

<sup>12</sup> prickly.

7 S. had the reputation of being a very clever man, and of excellent discernment in the chamber practice of the law. I suspect his knowledge did not amount to much. When a case of difficult disposition of money, testamentary or otherwise, came before him, he ordinarily handed it over with a few instructions to his man Lovel, who was a quick little fellow, and would dispatch it out of hand by the light of natural understanding, of which he had an uncommon share. It was incredible what repute for talents S. enjoyed by the mere trick of gravity. He was a shy man; a child might pose him in a minute,—indolent and procrastinating to the last degree. Yet men would give him credit for vast application, in spite of himself. He was not to be trusted with himself with impunity. He never dressed for a dinner party but he forgot his sword—they wore swords then—or some other necessary part of his equipage. Lovel had his eye upon him on all these occasions, and ordinarily gave him his cue.<sup>o</sup> If there was anything which he could speak unseasonably, he was sure to do it. He was to dine at a relative's of the unfortunate Miss Blandy on the day of her execution;—and L., who had a wary foresight of his probable hallucinations,<sup>o</sup> before he set out, schooled him with great anxiety not in any possible manner to allude to her story that day. S. promised faithfully to observe the injunction. He had not been seated in the parlor, where the company was expecting the dinner summons, four minutes, when, a pause in the conversation ensuing, he got up, looked out of window, and pulling down his ruffles—an ordinary motion with him—observed, “it was a gloomy day,” and added, “Miss Blandy must be hanged by this time, I suppose.”

Instances of this sort were perpetual. Yet S. was thought by some of the greatest men of his time a fit person to be consulted, not alone in matters pertaining to the law, but in the ordinary niceties and embarrassments of conduct — from force of manner entirely. He never laughed. He had the same good fortune among the female world, — was a known toast<sup>o</sup> with the ladies, and one or two are said to have died for lovè of him — I suppose, because he never trifled or talked gallantry with them, or paid them, indeed, hardly common attentions. He had a fine face and person, but wanted, me thought, the spirit that should have shown them off with advantage to the women. His eye lacked luster.<sup>13</sup>

8 Thomas Coventry was a cadet of the noble family of that name. He passed his youth in contracted circumstances, which gave him early those parsimonious<sup>o</sup> habits which in after-life never forsook him; so that, with one windfall<sup>o</sup> <sup>14</sup> or another, about the time I knew him he was master of four or five hundred thousand pounds; nor did he look, or walk, worth a moidore less. He lived in a gloomy house opposite the pump in Sergeant's-inn, Fleet Street. J., the counsel, is doing self-imposed penance in it, for what reason I divine not, at this day. C. had an agreeable seat at North Cray, where he seldom spent above a day or two at a time in the summer; but preferred, during the hot months, standing at his window in this damp, close, well-like mansion, to watch,

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<sup>13</sup> “ And then he drew a dial from his poke,  
And, looking on it with *lack-luster* eye,  
Says very wisely, ‘ It is ten o’clock.’ ”

— *As You Like It*, Act II, Scene 7.

<sup>14</sup> bequest, something which came to him without his own exertion, as the wind brings down fruit and sometimes trees.



as he said, "the maids drawing water all day long." I suspect he had his within-door reasons for the preference. *Hic currus et arma fuêre*.<sup>15</sup> He might think his treasures more safe. His house had the aspect of a strong-box. C. was a close hunk<sup>s</sup> — a hoarder rather than a miser — or, if a miser, none of the mad Elwes breed, who have brought discredit upon a character, which cannot exist without certain admirable points of steadiness and unity of purpose. One may hate a true miser, but cannot, I suspect, so easily despise him. By taking care of the pence, he is often enabled to part with the pounds, upon a scale that leaves us careless generous fellows halting at an immeasurable distance behind. C. gave away £30,000 at once in his lifetime to a blind charity. His housekeeping was severely looked after, but he kept the table of a gentleman. He would know who came in and who went out of his house, but his kitchen chimney was never suffered to freeze.<sup>16</sup>

9 Salt was his opposite in this, as in all — never knew what he was worth in the world; and having but a competency for his rank, which his indolent habits were little calculated to improve, might have suffered severely if he had not had honest people about him. Lovel took care of everything. He was at once his clerk, his good servant, his dresser, his friend, his "flapper," his guide, stop-watch, auditor, treasurer. He did nothing without consulting Lovel, or failed in anything without expecting and fearing his admonishing. He put himself almost too much in his hands, had they not been the purest in

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<sup>15</sup> "*hic illius arma,*

*Hic currus fuit.*"—Here her arms, here her chariot was. Lamb quotes with a free hand.

<sup>16</sup> grow cold.

the world. He resigned his title almost to respect as a master, if L. could ever have forgotten for a moment that he was a servant.

10 I knew this Lovel. He was a man of an incorrigible° and losing honesty.<sup>17</sup> A good fellow withal, and “would strike.” In the cause of the oppressed he never considered inequalities, or calculated the number of his opponents. He once wrested a sword out of the hand of a man of quality that had drawn upon him; and pommeled him severely with the hilt of it. The swords-man had offered insult to a female—an occasion upon which no odds against him could have prevented the interference of Lovel. He would stand next day bareheaded to the same person, modestly to excuse his interference—for L. never forgot rank, where something better was not concerned. L. was the liveliest little fellow breathing, had a face as gay as Garrick’s,<sup>18</sup> whom he was said greatly to resemble (I have a portrait of him which confirms it), possessed a fine turn for humorous poetry—next to Swift and Prior<sup>19</sup>—molded heads in clay or plaster of Paris to admiration, by the dint of natural genius merely; turned cribbage boards, and such small cabinet toys, to perfection; took a hand at quadrille or bowls with equal facility, made punch better than any man of his degree in England; had the merriest quips and conceits; and was altogether as brimful of rogueries

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<sup>17</sup> “Once in six or seven years our virtue becomes outrageous.”  
—*Macaulay’s Moore’s Life of Byron.*

<sup>18</sup> A most noted actor of Shakespeare’s dramas; had been a pupil of Dr. Johnson.

<sup>19</sup> Poets of the time of Addison and Pope. S. now best known as the author of *Gulliver*; P. scarcely known at all, though Johnson says he “burst out from an obscure original to great eminence.” *Sic transit.*

and inventions as you could desire. He was a brother of the angle moreover, and just such a free, hearty, honest companion as Mr. Izaak Walton<sup>20</sup> would have chosen to go a-fishing with. I saw him in his old age and the decay of his faculties, palsy-smitten, in the last sad stage of human weakness—"a remnant most forlorn of what he was,"—yet even then his eye would light up upon the mention of his favorite Garrick. He was greatest, he would say, in Bayes—"was upon the stage nearly throughout the whole performance, and as busy as a bee." At intervals, too, he would speak of his former life, and how he came up a little boy from Lincoln to go to service, and how his mother cried at parting with him, and how he returned, after some few years' absence, in his smart new livery, to see her, and she blessed herself at the change, and could hardly be brought to believe that it was "her own bairn." And then, the excitement subsiding, he would weep, till I have wished that sad second childhood might have a mother still to lay its head upon her lap. But the common mother of us all in no long time after received him gently into hers.

II With Coventry, and with Salt, in their walks upon the terrace, most commonly Peter Pierson would join to make up a third. They did not walk linked arm in arm in those days—"as now our stout triumvirs sweep the streets,"—but generally with both hands folded behind them for state, or with one at least behind, the other carrying a cane. Pierson was a benevolent, but not a prepossessing, man. He had that in his face which you could not term unhappiness; it rather implied an inca-

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<sup>20</sup> The noted fisherman of literature; author of *The Compleat Angler*.

capacity of being happy. His cheeks were colorless even to whiteness. His look was uninviting, resembling (but without his sourness) that of our great philanthropist.<sup>21</sup> I know that he *did* good acts, but I could never make out what he *was*. Contemporary° with these, but subordinate, was Daines Barrington — another oddity — he walked burly and square — in imitation, I think, of Coventry — howbeit he attained not to the dignity of his prototype.° Nevertheless, he did pretty well, upon the strength of being a tolerable antiquarian,° and having a brother a bishop. When the account of his year's treasureship came to be audited, the following singular charge was unanimously disallowed by the bench. "Item, disbursed Mr. Allen, the gardener, twenty shillings, for stuff to poison the sparrows, by my orders."

12 Next to him was old Barton — a jolly negation, who took upon him the ordering of the bills of fare for the parliament chamber, where the benchers dine — answering to the combination rooms at College — much to the easement of his less epicurean° brethren. I know nothing more of him. Then Read, and Twopeny — Read, good-humored and personable — Twopeny, good-humored, but thin, and felicitous° in jests upon his own figure. If T. was thin, Wharry was attenuated and fleeting. Many must remember him (for he was rather of later date) and his singular gait, which was performed by three steps and a jump regularly succeeding. The steps were little efforts, like that of a child beginning to walk; the jump comparatively vigorous, as a foot to an inch. Where he learned this figure, or what occasioned it, I

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<sup>21</sup> Dr. Johnson.

could never discover. It was neither graceful in itself, nor seemed to answer the purpose any better than common walking. The extreme tenuity<sup>o</sup> of his frame, I suspect, set him upon it. It was a trial of poisoning. Two-penny would often rally him upon his leanness, and hail him as a brother Lusty; but W. had no relish of a joke. His features were spiteful. I have heard that he would pinch his cat's ears extremely, when any thing had offended him.

13 Jackson — the omniscient<sup>o</sup> Jackson he was called — was of this period. He had the reputation of possessing more multifarious knowledge than any man of his time. He was the Friar Bacon <sup>22</sup> of the less literate portion of the Temple. I remember a pleasant passage, of the cook applying to him, with much formality of apology, for instructions how to write down *edge* bone of beef in his bill of commons.<sup>o</sup> <sup>23</sup> He was supposed to know, if any man in the world did. He decided the orthography to be — as I have given it — fortifying his authority with such anatomical reasons as dismissed the manciple<sup>o</sup> (for the time) learned and happy. Some do spell it yet, perversely, *aitch* bone, from a fanciful resemblance between its shape and that of the aspirate so denominated. I had almost forgotten Mingay with the iron hand — but he was somewhat later. He had lost his right hand by some accident, and supplied it with a grappling hook, which he wielded with a tolerable adroitness. I detected the substitute, before I was old enough to reason whether it were artificial or not. I remember the astonishment

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<sup>22</sup> 1214-1292. See three pages of wonderful interest in Green's Shorter History of England. "First in the great roll of modern science (is) the name of Roger Bacon."

<sup>23</sup> bill of fare.

it raised in me. He was a blustering, loud-talking person; and I reconciled the phenomenon to my ideas as an emblem of power—somewhat like the horns in the forehead of Michael Angelo's Moses.<sup>24</sup> Baron Maseres, who walks (or did till very lately) in the costume of the reign of George the Second, closes my imperfect recollections of the old benchers of the Inner Temple.

14 Fantastic forms, whither are ye fled? Or, if the like of you exist, why exist they no more for me? Ye inexplicable,<sup>o</sup> half-understood appearances, why comes in reason to tear away the prenatal mist, bright or gloomy, that enshrouded you? Why make ye so sorry a figure in my relation, who made up to me,—to my childish eyes—the mythology of the Temple? In those days I saw Gods, as “old men covered with a mantle” walking upon the earth. Let the dreams of classic idolatry perish,—extinct be the fairies and fairy trumpery of legendary fabling, in the hearts of childhood, there will, forever, spring up a well of innocent or wholesome superstition,—the seeds of exaggeration will be busy there, and vital—from every-day forms educing the unknown and uncommon. In that little Goshen<sup>25</sup> there will be light, when the grown world flounders about in the darkness of sense and materiality. While childhood, and while dreams, reducing<sup>26</sup> childhood, shall be left, imagination shall not have spread her holy wings totally to fly the earth.

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<sup>24</sup> A great painting by Angelo.

<sup>25</sup> The part of Egypt wherein Pharaoh allowed Jacob and his descendants to settle.

<sup>26</sup> bringing back childhood, making it “a visible thing on which the sun is shining.”—*Wordsworth*.



# A Quakers' Meeting

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1 Reader, would'st thou know what true peace and quiet mean; would'st thou find a refuge from the noises and clamors of the multitude; would'st thou enjoy at once solitude and society; would'st thou possess the depth of thine own spirit in stillness, without being shut out from the consolatory faces of thy species; would'st thou be alone, and yet accompanied; solitary, yet not desolate; singular, yet not without some to keep thee in countenance; a unit in aggregate; a simple in composite:—come with me into a Quakers' Meeting.

2 Dost thou love silence deep as that “before the winds were made”? go not out into the wilderness; descend not into the profundities<sup>o</sup> of the earth; shut not up the casements; nor pour wax into the little cells of thy ears, with little-faith'd self-mistrusting Ulysses.<sup>1</sup>—Retire with me into a Quakers' Meeting.

3 For a man to refrain even from good words, and to hold his peace, it is commendable; but for a multitude, it is great mastery.

4 What is the stillness of the desert, compared with this place? what the uncommunicating muteness of fishes?—here the goddess reigns and revels.—“Boreas, and Cesias, and Argestes loud,” do not with their inter-confounding uproars more augment the brawl—nor the waves of the blown Baltic with their clubbed sounds<sup>2</sup>—than their opposite ( Silence her sacred self ) is multiplied

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<sup>1</sup> Ulysses so secured the ears of his sailors against the allure-ment of the Sirens, but had himself tied to a mast.

<sup>2</sup> Where many silences are “clubbed,” or united.

and rendered more intense by numbers, and by sympathy. She too hath her deeps, that call unto deeps. Negation itself hath a positive more and less; and closed eyes would seem to obscure the great obscurity of midnight.

5 There are wounds which an imperfect solitude cannot heal. By imperfect I mean that which a man enjoyeth by himself. The perfect is that which he can sometimes attain in crowds, but nowhere so absolutely as in a Quakers' Meeting. Those first hermits did certainly understand this principle, when they retired into Egyptian solitudes, not singly, but in shoals, to enjoy one another's want of conversation. The Carthusian<sup>3</sup> is bound to his brethren by this agreeing spirit of incommunicativeness. In secular occasions, what so pleasant as to be reading a book through a long winter evening, with a friend sitting by — say, a wife — he, or she, too (if that be probable), reading another, without interruption, or oral communication? — can there be no sympathy without the gabble of words? — away with this inhuman, shy, single, shade- and cavern-haunting solitariness. Give me, Master Zimmermann,<sup>4</sup> a sympathetic solitude.

6 To pace alone in the cloisters, or side aisles of some cathedral, time-stricken;

Or under hanging mountains,  
Or by the fall of fountains;

is but a vulgar luxury, compared with that which those enjoy who come together for the purposes of more complete, abstracted solitude. This is the loneliness "to be felt." — The Abbey Church of Westminster hath nothing so solemn, so spirit-soothing, as the naked walls and

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<sup>3</sup> A member of an old religious order in France, at Chartreuse.

<sup>4</sup> Author of a book on Solitude.

benches of a Quakers' Meeting. Here are no tombs, no inscriptions,—

Sands, ignoble things,  
Dropt from the ruined sides of kings:

but here is something which throws Antiquity herself into the foreground — SILENCE — eldest of things — language of old Night — primitive Discourse — to which the insolvent<sup>o</sup> decays of moldering grandeur have but arrived by a violent, and, as we may say, unnatural progression.

How reverend is the view of these hushed heads,  
Looking tranquillity! <sup>5</sup>

7 Nothing-plotting, nought-caballing, unmischievous synod! convocation without intrigue! parliament without debate! what a lesson dost thou read to council, and to consistory<sup>o</sup>! — if my pen treat of you lightly — as haply it will wander — yet my spirit hath gravely felt the wisdom of your custom, when sitting among you in deepest peace, which some out-welling tears would rather confirm than disturb, I have reverted to the times of your beginnings, and the sowings of the seed by Fox and Dewesbury.<sup>o</sup> I have witnessed that which brought before my eyes your heroic tranquillity, inflexible to the rude jests and serious violences of the insolent soldiery, republican or royalist, sent to molest you,— for ye sat betwixt the fires of two persecutions, the outcast and offscouring of church and presbytery. I have seen the reeling sea-ruffian, who had wandered into your receptacle with the avowed

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<sup>5</sup> "How reverend is the face of this tall pile,

Looking tranquillity."—*Congreve*.

<sup>o</sup> Eminent early Quakers. Fox is said to have been the first of his sect to be called "Quaker."

intention of disturbing your quiet, from the very spirit of the place receive in a moment a new heart, and presently sit among ye as a lamb amidst lambs. And I remember Penn before his accusers, and Fox in the bail-dock, where he was lifted up in spirit, as he tells us, and "the Judge and the Jury became as dead men under his feet."

8 Reader, if you are not acquainted with it, I would recommend to you, above all church-narratives, to read Sewel's "History of the Quakers." It is in folio, and is the abstract of the Journals of Fox and the primitive Friends. It is far more edifying and affecting than anything you will read of Wesley and his colleagues. Here is nothing to stagger you, nothing to make you mistrust, no suspicion of alloy, no drop or dreg<sup>o</sup> of the worldly or ambitious spirit. You will here read the true story of that much-injured, ridiculed man (who perhaps hath been a byword in your mouth)—James Naylor: what dreadful sufferings, with what patience, he endured, even to the boring through of his tongue with red-hot irons, without a murmur; and with what strength of mind, when the delusion he had fallen into, which they stigmatized<sup>o</sup> for blasphemy, had given way to clearer thoughts, he could renounce his error, in a strain of the beautifullest humility, yet keep his first grounds, and be a Quaker still!—so different from the practice of your common converts from enthusiasm, who, when they apostatize,<sup>o</sup> *apostatize all*, and think they can never get far enough from the society of their former errors, even to the renunciation of some saving truths, with which they had been mingled, not implicated.

9 Get the Writings of John Woolman by heart; and love the early Quakers.

How far the followers of these good men in our days have kept to the primitive spirit, or in what proportion they have substituted formality for it, the Judge of Spirits can alone determine. I have seen faces in their assemblies, upon which the dove sat visibly brooding. Others again I have watched, when my thoughts should have been better engaged, in which I could possibly detect nothing but a blank inanity.<sup>o</sup> But quiet was in all, and the disposition to unanimity and the absence of the fierce controversial workings. If the spiritual pretensions of the Quakers have abated, at least they make few pretenses. Hypocrites they certainly are not in their preaching. It is seldom indeed that you shall see one get up amongst them to hold forth. Only now and then a trembling, female, generally *ancient* voice is heard — you cannot guess from what part of the meeting it proceeds — with a low, buzzing, musical sound, laying out a few words which “she thought might suit the condition of some present,” with a quaking difference, which leaves no possibility of supposing that anything of female vanity was mixed up, where the tones were so full of tenderness, and a restraining modesty. The men, for what I have observed, speak seldomer.

10 Once only, and it was some years ago, I witnessed a sample of the old Foxian orgasm.<sup>7</sup> It was a man of giant stature, who, as Wordsworth phrases it, might have danced “from head to foot equipt in iron mail.” His frame was of iron too. But *he* was malleable. I saw him shake all over with the spirit — I dare not say of delusion. The strivings of the outer man were unutterable — he seemed not to speak, but to be spoken from. I saw

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<sup>7</sup> excitement, as in the days of Fox.

the strong man bowed down, and his knees to fail — his joints all seemed loosening — it was a figure to set off against Paul Preaching — the words he uttered were few, and sound — he was evidently resisting his will — keeping down his own word-wisdom with more mighty effort, than the world's orators strain for theirs. "He had been a *WIT* in his youth," he told us, with expressions of a sober remorse. And it was not till long after the impression had begun to wear away, that I was enabled, with something like a smile, to recall the striking incongruity<sup>o</sup> of the confession — understanding the term in its worldly acceptation — with the frame and physiognomy of the person before me. His brow would have scared away the Levites — the *Jocos Risus-que*<sup>8</sup> — faster than the Loves fled the face of *Dis*<sup>9</sup> at Enna. By *wit*, even in his youth, I will be sworn, he understood something far within the limit of an allowable liberty.

II More frequently the Meeting is broken up without a word having been spoken. But the mind has been fed. You go away with a sermon not made with hands. You have been in the milder caverns of Trophonius;<sup>10</sup> or as in some den, where that fiercest and savagest of all wild creatures, the TONGUE, that unruly member, has strangely lain tied up and captive. You have bathed with stillness. O when the spirit is sore fretted, even tired to sickness of the janglings, nonsense-noises of the world, what a balm and a solace it is, to go and seat yourself, for a quiet half hour, upon some undisputed corner of a bench, among the gentle Quakers!

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<sup>8</sup> Jokers and laughers.

<sup>9</sup> Pluto.

<sup>10</sup> Builder of the first temple at Delphi.



Their garb and stillness conjoined, present a uniformity, tranquil and herd-like — as in the pasture — “ forty feeding like one.”

The very garments of a Quaker seem incapable of receiving a soil; and cleanliness in them to be something more than the absence of its contrary. Every Quakeress is a lily; and when they come up in bands to their Whitsun <sup>11</sup>-conferences, whitening the easterly streets of the metropolis, from all parts of the United Kingdom, they show like troops of the Shining Ones.

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<sup>11</sup> Seventh Sunday after Easter.

## Grace before Meat

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1 The custom of saying grace at meals had, probably, its origin in the early times of the world, and the hunter state of men, when dinners were precarious<sup>o</sup> things, and a full meal was something more than a common blessing! when a bellyfull was a windfall,<sup>o</sup> and looked like a special providence. In the shouts and triumphal songs with which, after a season of sharp abstinence, a lucky booty of deer's or goat's flesh would naturally be ushered home, existed, perhaps, the germ of the modern grace. It is not otherwise easy to be understood, why the blessing of food—the act of eating—should have had a particular expression of thanksgiving annexed to it, distinct from that implied and silent gratitude with which we are expected to enter upon the enjoyment of the many other various gifts and good things of existence.

2 I own that I am disposed to say grace upon twenty other occasions in the course of the day besides my dinner. I want a form for setting out upon a pleasant walk, for a moonlight ramble, for a friendly meeting, or a solved problem. Why have none for books, those spiritual repasts—a grace before Milton—a grace before Shakespeare—a devotional exercise proper to be said before reading the *Fairy Queen*?—but the received ritual having prescribed these forms to the solitary ceremony of manducation,<sup>o</sup> I shall confine my observations to the experience which I have had of the grace, properly so called; commending my new scheme for extension to a niche in the grand philosophical, poetical, and per-

chance in part heretical, liturgy,<sup>°</sup> now compiling by my friend Homo Humanus,<sup>1</sup> for the use of a certain snug congregation of Utopian<sup>2</sup> Rabelæian<sup>3</sup> Christians, no matter where assembled.

3 The form, then, of the benediction before eating has its beauty at a poor man's table, or at the simple and unprovocative repast of children. It is here that the grace becomes exceedingly graceful. The indigent<sup>°</sup> man, who hardly knows whether he shall have a meal the next day or not, sits down to his fare with a present sense of the blessing, which can be but feebly acted by the rich, into whose minds the conception of wanting a dinner could never, but by some extreme theory, have entered. The proper end of food — the animal sustenance — is barely contemplated by them. The poor man's bread is his daily bread, literally his bread for the day. Their courses are perennial.<sup>°</sup>

4 Again the plainest diet seems the fittest to be preceded by the grace. That which is least stimulative to appetite, leaves the mind most free for foreign considerations. A man may feel thankful, heartily thankful, over a dish of plain mutton with turnips, and have leisure to reflect upon the ordinance and institution of eating; when he shall confess a perturbation of mind, inconsistent with the purposes of the grace, at the presence of venison or turtle. When I have sat (a *rarus hospes*),<sup>4</sup> at rich men's tables, with the savory soup and messes steaming up the nostrils, and moistening the lips of the guests with desire and a

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<sup>1</sup> Literally, a human man.

<sup>2</sup> A name — *Utopia* — invented by Sir Thomas More, meaning *nowhere*.

<sup>3</sup> A French satirist Rabelais (Räh'bla) of four centuries ago.

<sup>4</sup> An unfrequent guest.

distracted choice, I have felt the introduction of that ceremony to be unseasonable. With the ravenous orgasm<sup>5</sup> upon you, it seems impertinent to interpose a religious sentiment. It is a confusion of purpose to mutter out praises from a mouth that waters. The heats of epicurism<sup>o</sup> put out the gentle flame of devotion. The incense which rises round is pagan, and the bellygod intercepts it for his own. The very excess of the provision beyond the needs, takes away all sense of proportion between the end and means. The giver is veiled by his gifts. You are startled at the injustice of returning thanks—for what?—for having too much, while so many starve. It is to praise the Gods amiss.

5 I have observed this awkwardness felt, scarce consciously perhaps, by the good man who says the grace. I have seen it in clergymen and others,—a sort of shame,—a sense of the co-presence of circumstances which unhallow the blessing. After a devotional tone put on for a few seconds, how rapidly the speaker will fall into his common voice! helping himself or his neighbor, as if to get rid of some uneasy sensation of hypocrisy. Not that the good man was a hypocrite, or was not most conscientious in the discharge of the duty; but he felt in his inmost mind the incompatibility of the scene and the viands before him with the exercise of a calm and rational gratitude.

6 I hear somebody exclaim,—Would you have Christians sit down at table, like hogs to their troughs, without remembering the Giver?—no,—I would have them sit down as Christians, remembering the Giver, and less like hogs. Or if their appetites must run riot, and they must

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<sup>5</sup> hunger.

pamper themselves with delicacies for which east and west are ransacked, I would have them postpone their benediction to a fitter season, when appetite is laid; when the still small voice can be heard, and the reason of the grace returns — with temperate diet and restricted dishes. Gluttony and surfeiting are no proper occasions for thanksgiving. When Jeshurun<sup>6</sup> waxed fat, we read that he kicked. Virgil knew the harpy-nature better, when he put into the mouth of Celæno<sup>7</sup> anything but a blessing. We may be gratefully sensible of the deliciousness of some kinds of food beyond others, though that is a meaner and inferior gratitude; but the proper object of the grace is sustenance, not relishes; daily bread, not delicacies; the means of life, and not the means of pampering the carcass. With what frame or composure, I wonder, can a city chaplain pronounce his benediction at some great Hall-feast, when he knows that his last concluding pious word — and that, in all probability, the sacred name which he preaches — is but the signal for so many impatient harpies to commence their foul orgies, with as little sense of true thankfulness (which is temperance) as those Virgilian fowl! It is well if the good man himself does not feel his devotions a little clouded, those foggy sensuous<sup>o</sup> steams mingling with and polluting the pure altar sacrifice.

7 The severest satire upon full tables and surfeits is the

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<sup>6</sup> Adapted from Deuteronomy 32:15.

<sup>7</sup> One of Virgil's harpies, "Virgilian fowl," who foretells dire hunger to be endured by the Trojans. Spenser alludes to the story: —

"Whiles sad Celeno, sitting on a clifte,  
A song of bale and bitter sorrow sings,  
That heart of flint asonder could have rifte."

banquet which Satan, in the *Paradise Regained*, provides for a temptation in the wilderness:—

A table richly spread in regal mode  
With dishes piled, and meats of noblest sort  
And savor; beasts of chase, or fowl of game,  
In pastry built, or from the spit, or boiled,  
Gris-amber-steamed; all fish from sea or shore,  
Freshet or purling brook, for which was drained  
Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Afric coast.

8 The Tempter, I warrant you, thought these cates° would go down without the recommendatory preface of a benediction. They are like to be short graces where the devil plays the host. I am afraid the poet wants his usual decorum in this place. Was he thinking of the old Roman luxury, or of a gaudy day at Cambridge? This was a temptation fitter for a Heliogabalus.<sup>8</sup> The whole banquet is too civic and culinary, and the accompaniments altogether a profanation of that deep, abstracted holy scene. The mighty artillery of sauces, which the cook-fiend conjures up, is out of proportion to the simple wants and plain hunger of the guest. He that disturbed him in his dreams, from his dreams might have been taught better. To the temperate fantasies of the famished Son of God, what sort of feasts presented themselves?—He dreamed indeed,

As appetite is wont to dream,  
Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet.

But what meats?—

Him thought,<sup>9</sup> he by the brook of Cherith stood,  
And saw the ravens with their horny beaks

<sup>8</sup> A royal Roman gourmand.

<sup>9</sup> An idiom like *methought*—it thought, or seemed, to him.  
“Great pity was it, as it thought hem alle.”

—*The Knightes Tale*.



Food to Elijah bringing even and morn;  
 Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought:  
 He saw the prophet also how he fled  
 Into the desert, and how there he slept  
 Under a juniper; then how awaked  
 He found his supper on the coals prepared,  
 And by the angel was bid rise and eat,  
 And ate the second time after repose,  
 The strength whereof sufficed him forty days;  
 Sometimes, that with Elijah he partook,  
 Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.<sup>10</sup>

Nothing in Milton is finelier fancied than these temperate dreams of the divine Hungerer. To which of these two visionary banquets, think you, would the introduction of what is called the grace have been the most fitting and pertinent?

9 Theoretically I am no enemy to graces; but practically I own that (before meat especially) they seem to involve something awkward and unseasonable. Our appetites, of one or another kind, are excellent spurs to our reason, which might otherwise but feebly set about the great ends of preserving and continuing the species. They are fit blessings to be contemplated at a distance with a becoming gratitude; but the moment of appetite (the judicious reader will apprehend me) is, perhaps, the least fit season for that exercise. The Quakers, who go about their business of every description with more calmness than we, have more title to the use of these benedictory prefaces. I have always admired their silent grace, and the more because I have observed their applications to the meat and drink following to be less passionate and sensual than

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<sup>10</sup>

“Hast thou

At rich men’s tables eaten bread and pulse?

Unarmed, faced danger with a heart of trust?”—*Emerson*.

ours. They are neither gluttons nor wine-bibbers as a people. They eat, as a horse bolts his chopped hay, with indifference, calmness, and cleanly circumstances. They neither grease nor slop themselves. When I see a citizen in his bib and tucker, I cannot imagine it a surplice.<sup>11</sup> 10 I am no Quaker at my food. I confess I am not indifferent to the kinds of it. Those unctuous morsels of deer's flesh were not made to be received with dispassionate services. I hate a man who swallows it, affecting not to know what he is eating. I suspect his taste in higher matters. I shrink instinctively from one who professes to like minced veal. There is a physiognomical<sup>o</sup> character in the tastes of food. C—— holds that a man cannot have a pure mind who refuses apple-dumplings. I am not certain but he is right. With the decay of my first innocence, I confess a less and less relish daily for those innocuous<sup>o</sup> cates. The whole vegetable tribe have lost their gust<sup>o</sup> with me. Only I stick to asparagus, which still seems to inspire gentle thoughts. I am impatient and querulous<sup>o</sup> under culinary<sup>o</sup> disappointments, as to come home at the dinner hour, for instance, expecting some savory mess, and to find one quite tasteless and sapidless. Butter ill melted — that commonest of kitchen failures — puts me beside my tenor. The author of *The Rambler* used to make inarticulate animal noises over a favorite food.<sup>12</sup> Was this the music quite proper to be preceded by the grace? or would the pious man have done better to postpone his devotions to a season when the blessing might be contemplated with less perturbation?

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<sup>11</sup> and therefore a token of some religious rite.

<sup>12</sup> Macaulay says that Dr. Johnson ate as it was natural that a man should eat who, during a great part of his life, had passed the morning in doubt whether he should have food for the afternoon.

I quarrel with no man's tastes, nor would set my thin face against those excellent things, in their way, jollity and feasting. But as these exercises, however laudable, have little in them of grace or gracefulness, a man should be sure, before he ventures so to grace them, that while he is pretending his devotions elsewhere, he is not secretly kissing his hand to some great fish — his Dagon — with a special consecration of no ark but the fat tureen before him. Graces are the sweet preluding strains to the banquets of angels and children; to the roots and severer repasts of the Chartreuse;<sup>13</sup> to the slender, but not slenderly acknowledged, refection of the poor and humble man; but at the heaped-up boards of the pampered and the luxurious they become of dissonant<sup>o</sup> mood, less timid and tuned to the occasion, methinks, than the noise of those better befitting organs would be which children hear tales of, at Hog's Norton. We sit too long at our meals, or are too curious in the study of them or too disordered in our application to them, or engross too great a portion of these good things (which should be common) to our share, to be able with any grace to say grace. To be thankful for what we grasp exceeding our proportion, is to add hypocrisy to injustice. A lurking sense of this truth is what makes the performance of this duty so cold and spiritless a service at most tables. In houses where the grace is as indispensable as the napkin, who has not seen that never settled question arise, as to *who shall say it?* while the good man of the house and the visitor clergyman, or some other guest, belike of next authority, from years or gravity, shall be bandying about the office between them as a matter of compli-

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<sup>13</sup> A monastery.

ment, each of them not unwilling to shift the awkward burden of an equivocal duty from his own shoulders?

11 I once drank tea in company with two Methodist divines of different persuasions,<sup>o</sup> whom it was my fortune to introduce to each other for the first time that evening. Before the first cup was handed round, one of these reverend gentlemen put it to the other, with all due solemnity, whether he chose to *say anything*. It seems it is the custom of some sectaries<sup>o</sup> to put up a short prayer before this meal also. His reverend brother did not at first quite apprehend him, but upon an explanation, with little less importance he made answer that it was not a custom known in his church; in which courteous evasion the other acquiescing for good manners' sake, or in compliance with a weak brother, the supplementary or tea-grace was waived<sup>o</sup> altogether. With what spirit might not Lucian<sup>14</sup> have painted two priests of *his* religion playing into each other's hands the compliment of performing or omitting a sacrifice,—the hungry God meantime, doubtful of his incense, with expectant nostrils hovering over the two flamens;<sup>o</sup> and (as between two stools) going away in the end without his supper.

12 A short form upon these occasions is felt to want reverence; a long one, I am afraid, cannot escape the charge of impertinence. I do not quite approve of the epigrammatic conciseness with which that equivocal wag (but my pleasant school-fellow) C. V. L., when importuned for a grace, used to inquire, first slyly leering down the table, "Is there no clergyman here?"—significantly adding, "Thank G—." Nor do I think our old form at school quite pertinent, where we were used to preface our bald

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<sup>14</sup> A Roman satirist.

bread-and-cheese-suppers with a preamble, connecting with that humble blessing a recognition of benefits the most awful and overwhelming to the imagination which religion has to offer. *Non tunc illis erat locus*.<sup>15</sup> I remember we were put to it to reconcile the phrase "good creatures," upon which the blessing rested, with the fare set before us, wilfully understanding that expression in a low and animal sense,—till some one recalled a legend, which told how, in the golden days of Christ's,<sup>16</sup> the young Hospitallers were wont to have smoke-joints of roast meat upon their nightly boards, till some pious benefactor, commiserating the decencies, rather than the palates, of the children, commuted our flesh for garments, and gave us — *horresco referens* <sup>17</sup>—trousers instead of mutton.

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<sup>15</sup> It was not the time for such things.

<sup>16</sup> Christ's Hospital.

<sup>17</sup> Recalling it, I shudder.

## Dream Children; A Revery

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CHILDREN love to listen to stories about their elders, when *they* were children; to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle, or granddame, whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother Field, who lived in a great house in Norfolk (a hundred times bigger than that in which they and papa lived) which had been the scene — so at least it was generally believed in that part of the country — of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the *Children in the Wood*. Certain it is that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the *Robin Redbreast*; till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no story upon it. Here Alice put out one of her dear mother's looks too tender to be called upbraiding. Then I went on to say, how religious and how good their great-grandmother Field was, how beloved and respected by everybody, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the charge of it (and yet in some respects she might be said to be the mistress of it too) committed to her by the owner, who preferred living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining county; but still she lived in it in a manner as if it had been her own, and kept up



the dignity of the great house in a sort while she lived, which afterward came to decay, and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if some one were to carry away the old tombs they had seen lately at the Abbey, and stick them up in Lady C.'s tawdry gilt drawing-room. Here John smiled, as much as to say, "that would be foolish indeed. And then I told how, when she came to die, her funeral was attended by a concourse of all the poor, and some of the gentry too, of the neighborhood for many miles round, to show their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good and religious woman; so good indeed that she knew all the Psalter by heart, ay, and a great part of the Testament besides. Here little Alice spread her hands. Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person their great-grandmother Field once was; and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer,—here Alice's little right foot played an involuntary movement, till, upon my looking grave, it desisted,—the best dancer, I was saying, in the country, till a cruel disease, called a cancer, came, and bowed her down with pain; but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them stoop, but they were still upright, because she was so good and religious. Then I told how she was used to sleep by herself in a lone chamber of the great lone house; and how she believed that an apparition of two infants was to be seen at midnight gliding up and down the great staircase near where she slept, but she said "those innocents would do her no harm;" and how frightened I used to be, though in those days I had my maid to sleep with me, because I was never half so good

or religious as she,—and yet I never saw the infants. Here John expanded all his eyebrows and tried to look courageous. Then I told how good she was to all her grandchildren, having us to the great house in the holidays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself, in gazing upon the old busts of the twelve Cæsars, that had been Emperors of Rome, till the old marble heads would seem to live again, or I to be turned into marble with them; how I never could be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast empty rooms, with their worn-out hangings, fluttering tapestry, and carved oaken panels, with the gilding almost rubbed out,—sometimes in the spacious old-fashioned gardens, which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me,—and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls, without my ever offering to pluck them, because they were forbidden fruit, unless now and then,—and because I had more pleasure in strolling about among the old melancholy-looking yew-trees, or the firs, and picking up the red berries, and fir-apples, which were good for nothing but to look at,—or in lying about upon the fresh grass with all the fine garden smells around me,—or basking in the orangery, till I could almost fancy myself ripening too along with the oranges and the limes in that grateful warmth,—or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fish-pond at the bottom of the garden, with here and there a great sulky pike hanging midway down the water in silent state, as if it mocked at their impertinent riskings;—I had more pleasure in these busy-idle diversions than in all the sweet flavors of peaches, nectarines, oranges, and such-like common baits of children. Here John slyly deposited back upon the plate a bunch of grapes, which,

not unobserved by Alice, he had meditated dividing with her, and both seemed willing to relinquish them for the present as irrelevant. Then, in somewhat a more heightened tone, I told how, though their great-grandmother Field loved all her grandchildren, yet in an especial manner she might be said to love their uncle, John L——, because he was so handsome and spirited a youth, and a king to the rest of us; and, instead of moping about in solitary corners, like some of us, he would mount the most mettlesome horse he could get, when but an imp no bigger than themselves, and make it carry him half over the country in a morning, and join the hunters when there were any out,—and yet he loved the old great house and gardens too, but had too much spirit to be always pent up within their boundaries,—and how their uncle grew up to man's estate as brave as he was handsome, to the admiration of everybody, but of their great-grandmother Field most especially; and how he used to carry me upon his back when I was a lame-footed boy—for he was a good bit older than me—many a mile when I could not walk for pain;—and how in after-life he became lame-footed too, and I did not always (I fear) make allowances enough for him when he was impatient and in pain, nor remember sufficiently how considerate he had been to me when I was lame-footed; and how when he died, though he had not been dead an hour, it seemed as if he had died a great while ago, such a distance there is betwixt life and death; and how I bore his death, as I thought pretty well at first, but afterward it haunted and haunted me; and though I did not cry or take it to heart as some do, and as I think he would have done if I had died, yet I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much I had loved him. I missed

his kindness, and I missed his crossness, and wished him to be alive again, to be quarreling with him (for we quarreled sometimes), rather than not have him again, and was as uneasy without him, as he their poor uncle must have been when the doctor took off his limb. Here the children fell a-crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for Uncle John, and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about their uncle, but to tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother. Then I told how, for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W—n; and, as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty, and denial meant in maidens, — when suddenly turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of representment, that I became in doubt which of them stood before me, or whose that bright hair was; and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding, till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech: “We are not of Alice nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice call Bartrum father. We are nothing; less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages before we have existence, and a name;” ——— and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor armchair, where I had fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side,—but John L. (or James Elia) was gone forever.

## New Year's Eve.

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1 EVERY man hath two birthdays: two at least in every year, which set him upon revolving the lapse of time, as it affects his mortal duration. The one is that which in an especial manner he termeth *his*. In the gradual desuetude° of old observances, this custom of solemnizing our proper birthday hath nearly passed away, or is left to children, who reflect nothing at all about the matter, nor understanding anything in it beyond cake and orange. But the birth of a New Year is of an interest too wide to be pretermitted° by king or cobbler. No one ever regarded the first of January with indifference. It is that from which all date their time and count upon what is left. It is the nativity of our common Adam.

2 Of all sound of all bells (bells, the music nighest bordering upon heaven)—most solemn and touching is the peal which rings out the Old Year. I never hear it without a gathering-up of my mind to a concentration of all the images that have been diffused° over the past twelve-month; all I have done or suffered, performed or neglected—in that regretted time. I begin to know its worth, as when a person dies. It takes a personal color; nor was it a poetical flight in a contemporary,° when he exclaimed,—

I saw the skirts of the departing year.

3 It is no more than what in sober sadness every one of us seems to be conscious of, in that awful leave-taking. I am sure I felt it, and all felt it with me, last night; though some of my companions affected rather to mani-



fest an exhilaration° at the birth of the coming year, than any tender regrets for the decease of its predecessor. But I am none of those who —

Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.

4 I am naturally, beforehand, shy of novelties, new books, new faces, new years — from some mental twist which makes it difficult in me to face the prospective. I have almost ceased to hope; and am sanguine only in the prospects of other (former) years. I plunge into foregone visions and conclusions. I encounter pellmell with past disappointments. I am armor-proof against old discouragements. I forgive, or overcome in fancy, old adversaries. I play over again *for love*, as the gamblers phrase it, games for which I once paid so dear. I would scarce now have any of those untoward accidents and events of my life reversed. I would no more alter them than the incidents of some well-contrived novel. Methinks it is better that I should have pined away seven of my goldenest° years, when I was thrall° to the fair hair, the fairer eyes of Alice W—n, than that so passionate a love-adventure should be lost. It was better that our family should have missed that legacy, which old Dorrell cheated us of, than that I should have at this moment two thousand pounds *in banco*, and be without the idea of that specious° old rogue.

5 In a degree beneath manhood, it is my infirmity to look back upon those early days. Do I advance a paradox, when I say, that, skipping over the intervention of forty years, a man may have leave to love *himself*, without the imputation of self-love.

6 If I know aught of myself, no one whose mind is introspective — and mine is painfully so — can have a less



respect for his present identity, than I have for the man Elia. I know him to be light, and vain, and humorsome; a notorious . . . ; addicted to . . . ; averse from counsel, neither taking it nor offering it; — . . . besides; a stammering buffoon; what you will; lay it on, and spare not; I subscribe to it all, and much more than thou canst be willing to lay at his door — but for the child Elia, that “other me,” there, in the background — I must take leave to cherish the remembrance of that young master — with as little reference, I protest, to this stupid changeling of five-and forty, as if it had been a child of some other house, and not of my parents. I can cry over its patient smallpox at five, and rougher medicaments.<sup>o</sup> I can lay its poor fevered head upon the sick pillow at Christ’s, and wake with it in surprise at the gentle posture of maternal tenderness hanging over it, that unknown had watched its sleep. I know how it shrank from any the least color of falsehood. God help thee, Elia, how art thou changed! — Thou art sophisticated<sup>1</sup> — I know how honest, how courageous (for a weakling) it was — how religious, how imaginative, how hopeful! From what have I not fallen, if the child I remember was indeed myself, — and not some dissembling<sup>o</sup> guardian, presenting a false identity, to give the rule to my unpracticed steps, and regulate the tone of my moral being!

7 That I am fond of indulging, beyond a hope of sympathy, in such retrospection, may be the symptom of some sickly idiosyncrasy.<sup>o</sup> Or is it owing to another cause: simply, that being without wife or family, I have

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<sup>1</sup> “Ha! here’s three on’s are *sophisticated*!  
Thou art the thing itself.”

— *Lear*, Act III, Scene 4.

not learned to project myself enough out of myself; and having no offspring of my own to dally with, I turn back upon memory, and adopt my own early idea, as my heir and favorite? If these speculations seem fantastical to thee, reader—(a busy man, perchance), if I tread out of the way of thy sympathy and am singularly conceited only, I retire impenetrable to ridicule, under the phantom cloud of Elia.

8 The elders, with whom I was brought up, were of a character not likely to let slip the sacred observance of any old institution; and the ringing out of the Old Year was kept by them with circumstances of peculiar ceremony.—In those days the sound of those midnight chimes, though it seemed to raise hilarity in all around me, never failed to bring a train of pensive° imagery into my fancy. Yet I then scarce conceived what it meant, or thought of it as a reckoning that concerned me. Not childhood alone, but the young man till thirty, never feels practically that he is mortal. He knows it indeed, and, if need were, he could preach a homily° on the fragility of life; but he brings it not home to himself, any more than in a hot June we can appropriate to our imagination the freezing days of December.<sup>2</sup> But now, shall I confess a truth?—I feel these audits° but too powerfully. I begin to count the probabilities of my duration, and to grudge at the expenditure of moments and shortest periods, like misers' farthings. In proportion as the years both lessen and shorten, I set more count° upon

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<sup>2</sup> "O, who can hold a fire in his hand  
By thinking on the frosty Caucasus?  
Or wallow naked in December snow  
By thinking on fantastic summer's heat?"

—*Richard II., Act I, Scene 3.*

their periods,<sup>o</sup> and would fain lay my ineffectual finger upon the spoke of the great wheel. I am not content to pass away "like a weaver's shuttle." Those metaphors<sup>o</sup> solace me not, nor sweeten the unpalatable<sup>o</sup> draught of mortality. I care not to be carried with the tide, that smoothly bears human life to eternity; and reluct<sup>o</sup> at the inevitable course of destiny. I am in love with this green earth; the face of town and country; the unspeakable rural solitudes; and the sweet security of streets. I would set up my tabernacle here. I am content to stand still at the edge to which I am arrived; I and my friends; to be no younger, no richer, no handsomer. I do not want to be weaned by age; or drop,<sup>3</sup> like mellow fruit, as they say into the grave.—Any alteration, on this earth of mine, in diet or in lodging, puzzles and discomposes<sup>o</sup> me. My household-gods plant a terrible fixed foot, and are not rooted up without blood.<sup>4</sup> They do not willingly seek Lavinian shores. A new state of being staggers me.

9 Sun, and sky, and breeze, and solitary walks, and summer holidays, and the greenness of fields, and the delicious juices of meats and fishes, and society, and the cheerful glass, and candlelight, and fireside conversations, and innocent vanities, and jests, and *irony itself*—do these things go out with life?

10 Can a ghost laugh, or shake his gaunt sides, when you are pleasant with him?

And you, my midnight darlings, my Folios! must I

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<sup>3</sup> "So mayst thou live, till, like ripe fruit, thou drop  
Into thy mother's lap; or be with ease  
Gathered, not harshly plucked."

—Milton, *Paradise Lost*, XI, 531.

<sup>4</sup> Remember an experience of Virgil's hero, *Æneid*, Book III, line 28.

part with the intense delight of having you (huge arm-fuls) in my embraces? Must knowledge come to me, if it comes at all, by some awkward experiment of intuition, and no longer by this familiar process of reading?

Shall I enjoy friendships there, wanting the smiling indications which point me to them here,—the recognizable face—the “sweet assurance of a look”—? <sup>5</sup>

II In winter this intolerable disinclination to dying—to give it its mildest name—does more especially haunt and beset me. In a genial August noon, beneath a sweltering sky, death is almost problematic.<sup>o</sup> At those times do such poor snakes as myself enjoy an immortality. Then we expand and burgeon.<sup>o</sup> <sup>6</sup> Then we are as strong again, as valiant again, as wise again, and a great deal taller. The blast that nips and shrinks me, puts me in thoughts of death. All things allied to the insubstantial, wait upon that master-feeling; cold, numbness, dreams, perplexity; moonlight itself, with its shadowy and spectral appearances,—that cold ghost of the sun, or Phœbus’ sickly sister, like that innutritious<sup>7</sup> one denounced in the Canticles:—I am none of her minions<sup>o</sup>—I hold with the Persian.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> By comparing the last words of this paragraph with note 54 in *Adonais*, the reader will see another specimen of free-and-easy quoting.

<sup>6</sup> “Heaven send it happy dew,

Earth lend it sap anew,

Gayly to *burgeon* and broadly to grow.”

—*The Lady of the Lake*.

<sup>7</sup> See *The Song of Solomon*, VIII, 8.

<sup>8</sup> A sun-worshiper.





PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY



## PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

1792-1822.

PAINTER, in his *A History of English Literature*, says: "Shelley is, perhaps, the most poetical of our poets. He has not the philosophic quality of Wordsworth, nor the versatile power of Byron; but in sustained loftiness and sweep of imagination he surpasses both his great contemporaries. He can never be a popular poet. He dwells habitually in an imaginative realm beyond the popular tastes and the popular capacity. No other poet seems to have the rapture of inspiration in a fuller degree. To some extent he was as the voice of one crying in a wilderness. He not only pointed out many of the evils of social life, but with steadfast faith prophesied a happier era. The principles that inspired much of his poetry, separated indeed from his extravagance, have since met with wide acceptance."

A note written in 1839 by Mrs. Shelley reads: "There is much in the *Adonais* which seems now more applicable to Shelley himself than to the young and gifted poet whom he mourned."

Shelley is perhaps the most noted example in that company of poets who live but a few years, and in those years do an amount of work which would not shame a long and busy life, and is almost beyond one's power to believe to be within the wide limits of human capacity.

His contributions to literature are not all poems. He wrote pamphlets, and at least two novels which did not long survive. This, however, cannot be said of all his prose. The *Defense of Poetry* is one of the finest bits

of prose and one of the best considered words on the side of poetry in the language. The prefaces and notes to some of his poems are well worth lingering over.

He wrote dramas, *Prometheus Unbound* and *The Cenci* being the greatest; allegories, as *Alastor*, or the *Spirit of Solitude*; and *The Revolt of Islam*, *A Poem in Twelve Cantos*.

It would not appear strange if some prophet should tell us that in centuries long hereafter the readers of that distant time should know Shelley as the author of *Adonais*, one of the half dozen great elegies; the *Ode to the West Wind*; *The Skylark*; *The Cloud*; the *Lines Written Among the Euganean Hills*, whatever may have been the fate of the long poems.

The *Adonais* was one of Shelley's last poems.

Every school-boy in literature knows the sad story of his end; his attempt with two companions to cross the Gulf of Spezia in order to return to his home from Leghorn, the storm, the agony of waiting the finding of the three bodies, in Shelley's pocket a volume of Keats's poems doubled back as if the reader had been interrupted in his reading and had thrust away the book in haste, the cremation of the bodies by the sailor Trelawny, Byron, and Leigh Hunt. The poet's ashes were deposited in the English burying ground at Rome. Trelawny placed a slab in the ground and inscribed it with Shelley's name, with an affectionate appositive, *cor cordium*, his date of birth and of death, with these lines from *The Tempest*:—

“Nothing of him that doth fade,  
But doth suffer a sea-change  
Into something rich and strange.”

## Adonais

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I WEEP for Adonais — he is dead!  
O, weep for Adonais! though our tears  
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head!  
And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years  
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers, 5  
And teach them thine own sorrow, say: “With me  
Died Adonais; till the Future dares  
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be  
An echo and a light unto eternity!”

Where wert thou mighty Mother, when he lay, 10  
When thy Son lay, pierced by the shaft which flies  
In darkness? where was lorn Urania <sup>1</sup>  
When Adonais died? With veiled eyes,  
'Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise  
She sate, while one, with soft enamored breath, 15  
Rekindled all the fading melodies,  
With which, like flowers that mock the corse beneath,  
He had adorned and hid the coming bulk of death.

O, weep for Adonais — he is dead!  
Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and weep! 20  
Yet wherefore? Quench within their burning bed  
Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep  
Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep;  
For he is gone, where all things wise and fair  
Descend;— oh, dream not that the amorous Deep 25

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<sup>1</sup> The Muse of Astronomy.

Will yet restore him to the vital air ;  
 Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at our despair.

Most musical of mourners, weep again !  
 Lament anew, Urania ! — He <sup>2</sup> died,  
 Who was the Sire of an immortal strain, <sup>30</sup>  
 Blind, <sup>4</sup> old, and lonely, when his country's pride,  
 The priest, the slave, and the liberticide,  
 Trampled and mocked with many a loathèd rite  
 Of lust and blood ; he went, unterrified,  
 Into the gulf of death ; but his clear Sprite <sup>35</sup>  
 Yet reigns o'er earth ; the third <sup>5</sup> among the sons of light.

Most musical of mourners, weep anew !  
 Not all to that bright station dared to climb ;  
 And happier they their happiness who knew,  
 Whose tapers yet burn through that night of time <sup>40</sup>  
 In which suns perished ; others more sublime,  
 Struck by the envious wrath of man or God,  
 Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent prime ;  
 And some yet live, treading the thorny road,  
 Which leads, through toil and hate, to Fame's serene  
 abode. <sup>6</sup> 45

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<sup>2</sup> Milton.

<sup>3</sup> breed, race. "The noblest of thy strain." — *Shakespeare*.

<sup>4</sup> "He passed the flaming bounds of place and time :

The living throne, the sapphire blaze,  
 Where angels tremble while they gaze,  
 He saw ; but, blasted with excess of light,  
 Closed his eyes in endless night."

— *Gray's The Progress of Poesy*.

<sup>5</sup> Homer, \*Dante, Milton.

"The first in loftiness of thought surpassed,  
 The next in majesty, in both the last." — *Dryden*.

<sup>6</sup> "Ah ! who can tell how hard it is to climb  
 The steep where Fame's proud temple shines afar ;

But now, thy youngest, dearest one has perished,  
 The nursling of thy widowhood; who grew,  
 Like a pale flower by some sad maiden cherished,  
 And fed with true love tears, instead of dew;  
 Most musical of mourners, weep anew! 50  
 Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the last,  
 The bloom, whose petals nipt before they blew  
 Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste;  
 The broken lily lies — the storm is overpast.

To that high Capital,<sup>7</sup> where kingly Death<sup>8</sup> 55  
 Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay,  
 He came; and bought, with price of purest breath,  
 A grave among the eternal.— Come away!  
 Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day  
 Is yet his fitting charnel-roof! while still 60  
 He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay;  
 Awake him not! surely he takes his fill  
 Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

He will awake no more, oh, never more! —  
 Within the twilight chamber spreads apace 65  
 The shadow of white Death, and at the door  
 Invisible Corruption waits to trace  
 His extreme<sup>9</sup> way to her dim dwelling-place;

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Ah! who can tell how many a soul sublime  
 Has felt the influence of malignant star."

— *Beattie's The Minstrel.*

<sup>7</sup> Rome.

<sup>8</sup> "for within the hollow crown  
 That rounds the mortal temples of a king  
 Keeps Death his Court."

— *Richard II., Act III, Scene 2.*

<sup>9</sup> Shelley seems here and elsewhere to accent the first syllable of this word.

The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and awe  
 Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to deface 70  
 So fair a prey, till darkness, and the law  
 Of change, shall o'er his sleep the mortal curtain draw.

O, weep for Adonais! — The quick Dreams,  
 The passion-wingèd Ministers of thought,  
 Who were his flocks, whom near the living streams 75  
 Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he taught  
 The love which was its music, wander not,—  
 Wander no more, from kindling brain to brain,  
 But droop there, whence they sprung; and mourn their  
 lot

Round the cold heart, where, after their sweet pain, 80  
 They ne'er will gather strength, or find a home again.

And one with trembling hands clasps his cold head,  
 And fans him with her moonlight wings, and cries;  
 "Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not dead;  
 See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes, 85  
 Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there lies  
 A tear some Dream<sup>10</sup> has loosened from his brain."  
 Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise!

She knew not 'twas her own; as with no stain  
 She faded, like a cloud which had outwept its rain. 90

One from a lucid urn of starry dew  
 Washed his light limbs as if embalming them;  
 Another clipt her profuse locks, and threw  
 The wreath upon him, like an anadem,<sup>o</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> "He bids thee to him send for his intent  
 A fit false Dreame."

— *The Faerie Queene, Canto I, Stanza 43.*



Which frozen tears instead of pearls begem; 95  
Another in her wilful grief would break  
Her bow and wingèd reeds, as if to stem  
A greater loss with one which was more weak;  
And dull the barbèd fire against his frozen cheek.

Another Splendor on his mouth alit, 100  
That mouth, whence it was wont to draw the breath  
Which gave it strength to pierce the guarded wit,  
And pass into the panting heart beneath  
With lightning and with music: the damp death  
Quenched its caress upon his icy lips; 105  
And, as a dying meteor stains <sup>11</sup> a wreath  
Of moonlight vapor, which the cold night clips,<sup>12</sup>  
It flushed through his pale limbs, and past to its eclipse.

And others came . . . Desires and Adorations,  
Wingèd Persuasions and veiled Destines, 110  
Splendors, and Glooms, and glimmering Incarnations  
Of hopes and fears, and twilight Phantasies;  
And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,  
And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam  
Of her own dying smile instead of eyes, 115  
Came in slow pomp; — the moving pomp might seem  
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream.

All he had loved, and molded into thought,  
From shape, and hue, and odor, and sweet sound,  
Lamented Adonais. Morning sought 120  
Her eastern watch-tower, and her hair unbound,  
Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,

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<sup>11</sup> tints.

<sup>12</sup> clasps, line 417.

Dimmed the ærial eyes that kindle day;  
 Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,  
 Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay, 125  
 And the wild winds flew round, sobbing in their dismay.

Lost Echo <sup>13</sup> sits amid the voiceless mountains,  
 And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,  
 And will no more reply to winds or fountains,  
 Or amorous birds perched on the young green spray,<sup>130</sup>  
 Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day;  
 Since she can mimic not his <sup>14</sup> lips, more dear  
 Than those for whose disdain she pined away  
 Into a shadow of all sounds: — a drear  
 Murmur, between their songs, is all the woodmen hear.<sup>135</sup>

Grief made the young Spring wild, and she threw down  
 Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were,<sup>15</sup>  
 Or they dead leaves; since her delight is flown  
 For whom should she have waked the sullen year?  
 To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so dear 140  
 Nor to himself Narcissus as to both  
 Thou Adonais: wan they <sup>16</sup> stand and sere  
 Amid the faint companions of their youth,  
 With dew all turned to tears; odor, to sighing ruth.<sup>o</sup>

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale <sup>17</sup> 145

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<sup>13</sup> " Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen  
 Within thy aery shell." — *Comus*.

Why "voiceless"?

<sup>14</sup> Those of Adonais, dearer than those of Narcissus, for whom  
 she pined into a shadow, or "a babbling gossip of the air."

<sup>15</sup> Notice that Shelley rhymes *were* and *year*.

<sup>16</sup> Buds, or Hyacinth and Narcissus?

<sup>17</sup> " Every thing did banish moan,  
 Save the nightingale alone,

Mourns not her mate with such melodious pain;  
 Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale  
 Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's domain  
 Her mighty youth, with morning doth complain,  
 Soaring and screaming round her empty nest, <sup>150</sup>  
 As Albion <sup>18</sup> wails for thee: the curse of Cain  
 Light on his <sup>19</sup> head who pierced thy innocent breast,  
 And scared the angel soul that was its earthly guest!

Ah woe is me! Winter is come and gone,  
 But grief returns with the revolving year; <sup>155</sup>  
 The airs and streams renew their joyous tone;  
 The ants, the bees, the swallows reappear;  
 Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead Seasons' bier;  
 The amorous birds now pair in every brake,  
 And build their mossy homes in field and brere; <sup>20</sup> <sup>160</sup>  
 And the green lizard, and the golden snake,  
 Like unimprisoned flames, out of their trance awake.

Through wood and stream and field and hill and Ocean  
 A quickening life from the earth's heart has burst  
 As it has ever done, with change and motion, <sup>165</sup>  
 From the great morning of the world when first  
 God dawned on Chaos; in its steam immersed  
 The lamps of Heaven flash with a softer light;  
 All baser things pant with life's sacred thirst; <sup>21</sup>

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She, poor bird, as all forlorn  
 Leaned her breast up till a thorn,  
 And there sung the dolefull'st ditty,  
 That to hear it was a pity."—*The Passionate Pilgrim*.

<sup>18</sup> England.

<sup>19</sup> The critic in the *Quarterly Review*.

<sup>20</sup> briar.

<sup>21</sup> A holy desire to live.

Diffuse themselves; and spend in love's delight, 170  
The beauty and the joy of their renewed might.

The leprous corpse touched by this spirit tender  
Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;  
Like incarnations of the stars when splendor  
Is changed to fragrance, they <sup>22</sup> illumine death 175  
And mock the merry worm that wakes beneath  
Nought we know, dies. Shall that alone which knows <sup>23</sup>  
Be as a sword consumed before the sheath  
By sightless lightning? — th' intense atom <sup>24</sup> glows  
A moment, then is quenched in a most cold repose. 180

Alas! that all we loved of him should be,  
But for our grief, as if it had not been,  
And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me! <sup>25</sup>  
Whence are we, and why are we? <sup>26</sup> of what scene  
The actors or spectators? Great and mean 185  
Meet massed in death, who lends what life must borrow.  
As long as skies are blue, and fields are green,  
Evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,  
Month follow month with woe, and year wake year to  
sorrow.

*He* will awake no more, oh, never more! 190  
"Wake thou," cried Misery, "childless Mother, rise  
Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy heart's core,  
A wound more fierce than his with tears and sighs."

<sup>22</sup> The flowers.

<sup>23</sup> The soul.

<sup>24</sup> But shall the soul do so?

<sup>25</sup> The indirect objective, or dative, sometimes follows the verb  
*to be* and its equivalent *worth*.

<sup>26</sup> "What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!"

— *Burke*.

And all the Dreams that watched Urania's eyes,  
 And all the Echoes whom their sister's song 195  
 Had held in holy silence, cried: "Arise!"  
 Swift as a Thought by the snake Memory stung,  
 From her ambrosial rest the fading Splendor sprung.

She rose like an autumnal Night, that springs  
 Out of the East, and follows wild and drear 200  
 The golden Day, which, on eternal wings,  
 Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,  
 Had left the Earth a corpse. Sorrow and fear  
 So struck, so roused, so rapt Urania;  
 So saddened round her like an atmosphere 205  
 Of stormy mist; so swept her on her way  
 Even to the mournful place where Adonais lay.

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,  
 Through camps and cities rough with stone, and steel,  
 And human hearts, which to her aery tread 210  
 Yielding not, wounded the invisible  
 Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell:  
 And barbèd tongues, and thoughts more sharp than  
 they  
 Rent the soft Form they never could repel,  
 Whose sacred blood, like the young tears of May, 215  
 Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving<sup>27</sup> way.

In the death chamber for a moment Death  
 Shamed by the presence of that living Might  
 Blushed to annihilation,<sup>28</sup> and the breath  
 Revisited those lips, and life's pale light 220

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<sup>27</sup> Lines 209 and following.

<sup>28</sup> Death died.

Flashed through those limbs, so late her dear delight.  
 "Leave me not wild and drear and comfortless,  
 As silent lightning leaves the starless night!"<sup>29</sup>  
 Leave me not!" cried Urania: her distress  
 Roused Death: Death rose and smiled, and met her vain  
 caress.

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again; 226  
 Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;  
 And in my heartless breast and burning brain  
 That word, that kiss shall all thoughts else survive,  
 With food of saddest memory kept alive, 230  
 Now thou art dead, as if it were a part  
 Of thee, my Adonais! I would give  
 All that I am to be as thou now art!  
 But I am chained to Time, and cannot thence depart!

"Oh gentle child, beautiful as thou wert, 235  
 Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men  
 Too soon, and with weak hands though mighty heart  
 Dare the unpastured<sup>30</sup> dragon in his den?  
 Defenseless as thou wert, oh where was then  
 Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the spear? 240  
 Or hadst thou waited the full cycle,<sup>31</sup> when  
 Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere,  
 The monsters of life's waste had fled from thee like deer.

"The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;  
 The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the dead; 245  
 The vultures to the conqueror's banner true  
 Who feed where Desolation first has fed,

<sup>29</sup> "The fitful gleams the darkness swallowed."—*Burns*.

<sup>30</sup> unfed, therefore hungry.

<sup>31</sup> Maturity.



And whose wings rain contagion; — how they fled,  
 When like Apollo, from his golden bow,  
 The Pythian <sup>32</sup> of the age one arrow sped 250  
 And smiled! — The spoilers tempt no second blow,  
 They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying low.

“ The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn;  
 He sets, and each ephemeral insect then  
 Is gathered into death without a dawn, 255  
 And the immortal stars awake again;  
 So is it in the world of living men:  
 A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight  
 Making earth bare and veiling heaven, and when  
 It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light 260  
 Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit’s awful night.”

Thus ceased she: <sup>33</sup> and the mountain shepherds <sup>34</sup> came,  
 Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent; <sup>35</sup>  
 The Pilgrim <sup>36</sup> of Eternity, whose fame  
 Over his living head like Heaven is bent, 265  
 An early but enduring monument,  
 Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song  
 In sorrow; from her wilds Ierne <sup>37</sup> sent  
 The sweetest lyrist <sup>38</sup> of her saddest wrong,  
 And love taught grief to fall like music from his tongue.  
 Midst others of less note, came one frail Form, <sup>39</sup> 271

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<sup>32</sup> Byron, in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*.

<sup>33</sup> Urania.

<sup>34</sup> The poets.

<sup>35</sup> In token of grief.

<sup>36</sup> Byron.

<sup>37</sup> Ireland.

<sup>38</sup> Moore.

<sup>39</sup> “ The four stanzas beginning with line 271 unquestionably refer to Shelley himself.” — *Halleck*.

A phantom among men ; companionless  
 As the last cloud of an expiring storm  
 Whose thunder is its knell ; he, as I guess,  
 Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness, 275  
 Actæon-like,<sup>40</sup> and now he fled astray  
 With feeble steps o'er the world's wilderness,  
 And his own thoughts, along that rugged way,  
 Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and their prey..

A pardlike Spirit beautiful and swift — 280  
 A Love in desolation masked ; — a Power  
 Girt round weakness ; — it can scarce uplift  
 The weight of the superincumbent hour ;  
 It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,  
 A breaking billow ; — even whilst we speak 285  
 Is it not broken ? On the withering flower  
 The killing sun smiles brightly : on a cheek  
 The life can burn in blood, even while the heart may  
 break.

His head was bound with pansies overblown,  
 And faded violets, white, and pied, and blue ; 290  
 And a light spear topped with a cypress cone,  
 Round whose rude shaft dark ivy tresses grew  
 Yet dripping with the forest's noonday dew,  
 Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart  
 Shook the weak hand that grasped it ; of that crew 295  
 He came the last, neglected and apart ;  
 A herd-abandoned deer struck by the hunter's dart.

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan

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<sup>40</sup> Actæon gazed upon Diana unappareled, and she changed him into a stag. The hounds then pursued him to the death.

Smiled through their tears; well knew that gentle band  
 Who in another's fate now wept his own; 300  
 As in the accents of an unknown <sup>41</sup> land,  
 He sung new sorrow; sad Urania scanned  
 The Stranger's mien, and murmured: "Who art thou?"  
 He answered not, but with a sudden hand  
 Made bare his branded and ensanguined brow, <sup>42</sup> 305  
 Which was like Cain's or Christ's — Oh! that it should  
 be so!

What softer voice is hushed over the dead?  
 Athwart what brow is that dark mantle thrown?  
 What form leans sadly o'er the white death-bed,  
 In mockery <sup>43</sup> of monumental stone, 310  
 The heavy heart heaving without a moan?  
 If it be He, <sup>44</sup> who, gentlest of the wise,  
 Taught, soothed, loved, honored the departed one;  
 Let me not vex, with inharmonious sighs  
 The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice. 315

Our Adonais has drunk poison — oh!  
 What deaf and viperous murderer could crown  
 Life's early cup with such a draught of woe?  
 The nameless worm would now itself disown:  
 It felt, yet could escape <sup>45</sup> the magic tone 320  
 Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and wrong,  
 But what was howling in one breast <sup>46</sup> alone,

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<sup>41</sup> Because Shelley was in virtual exile?

<sup>42</sup> Is this an answer? "Branded" with a variety of charges.  
 "Ensanguined," bloody, how so?

<sup>43</sup> imitation.

<sup>44</sup> Leigh Hunt.

<sup>45</sup> resist the influence of.

<sup>46</sup> Jeffrey's.

Silent with expectation of the song,  
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver lyre unstrung.

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame! 325  
Live! fear no heavier chastisement from me,  
Thou noteless blot on a remembered name!  
But be thyself, and know thyself to be!  
And ever at thy season <sup>47</sup> be thou free  
To still the venom when thy fangs o'erflow: 330  
Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling to thee;  
Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,  
And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt — as now.

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled  
Far from these carrion kites <sup>48</sup> that scream below; 335  
He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead;  
Thou canst not soar where he is sitting now.—  
Dust to the dust! but the pure spirit shall flow  
Back to the burning fountain whence it came,  
A portion of the Eternal, which must glow 340  
Through time and change, unquenchably the same,  
Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid hearth of shame.

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep —  
He hath awakened from the dream of life —  
'Tis we, who lost in stormy visions, keep 345  
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,  
And in mad trance, strike with our spirit's knife <sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> The time of the year when the viper's poison-sack is full.

<sup>48</sup> "And kites

Fly o'er our heads, and downward look on us,  
As we were sickly prey."—*Julius Cæsar*, Act V, Scene 1.  
"A prey for carrion kites."

—*Henry VI.*, Part II, Act V, Scene 2.

<sup>49</sup> "A dagger of the mind."—*Macbeth*, Act II, Scene 1.

Invulnerable nothings.— *We* decay  
Like corpses in a charnel: fear and grief  
Convulse us and consume us day by day, 350  
And cold hopes swarm like worms within our living clay.

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;  
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,  
And that unrest which men miscall delight,  
Can touch him not and torture not again; 355  
From the contagion of the world's slow stain <sup>50</sup>  
He is secure, and now can never mourn  
A heart grown cold, a head grown gray in vain;  
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,  
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn. 360

He lives, he wakes —'tis Death is dead, not he;  
Mourn not for Adonais — Thou young Dawn  
Turn all thy dew to splendor, for from thee  
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;  
Ye Caverns and ye Forests, cease to moan! 365  
Cease ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou Air  
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown  
O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it bare  
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its despair!

He is made one with Nature: <sup>51</sup> there is heard 370  
His voice in all her music, from the moan  
Of thunder, to the song of night's sweet bird;  
He is a presence to be felt and known  
In darkness and in light from herb and stone,

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<sup>50</sup> "black and grainèd spots

As will not leave their tinct."—*Hamlet*, Act III, Scene 4.

<sup>51</sup> "All are but parts of one stupendous whole."

—*Essay on Man*, line 267.

Spreading itself where'er that Power may move 375  
 Which has withdrawn his being to its own:  
 Which wields the world with never wearied love,  
 Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

He is a portion of the loveliness  
 Which once he made more lovely: he doth bear 380  
 His part, while the one Spirit,<sup>52</sup> plastic stress  
 Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there,  
 All new successions to the forms they wear;  
 Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks its flight  
 To its own likeness, as each mass may bear; 385  
 And bursting in its beauty and its might  
 From trees and beasts and men into the Heaven's light.

The splendors of the firmament of time  
 May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not;  
 Like stars to their appointed height they climb 390  
 And death is a low mist which cannot blot  
 The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought  
 Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,  
 And love and life contend in it, for what  
 Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there 395  
 And move like winds of light on dark and stormy air.

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown  
 Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal thought,  
 Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> The *Power*, line 375.

<sup>53</sup> "I thought of Chatterton, the marvelous boy,  
 The sleepless soul that perished in his pride."

— *Wordsworth*.

Born in 1752, lived eighteen years, wrote poems which he claimed were written in the reign of Edward IV. He died by his own hand. "This is the most extraordinary young man that has encountered my knowledge."—*Dr. Johnson*. "Mad, I think."—*Byron*.



Rose pale, his solemn agony had not 400  
 Yet faded from him; Sidney,<sup>54</sup> as he fought  
 And as he fell and as he lived and loved  
 Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,  
 Arose; and Lucan,<sup>55</sup> by his death approved:  
 Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing reproved. 405

And many more, whose names on Earth are dark,  
 But whose transmitted effluence cannot die  
 So long as fire outlives the parent spark,  
 Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.  
 "Thou art become as one of us," they cry, 410  
 "It was for thee<sup>56</sup> yon kingless sphere has long  
 Swung blind in unascended majesty,  
 Silent alone amid a Heaven of Song.  
 Assume thy wingèd throne, thou Vesper of our throng!"

Who mourns for Adonais? oh come forth 415  
 Fond wretch! and know thyself and him aright.  
 Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous Earth;  
 As from a center, dart thy spirit's light  
 Beyond all worlds, until its spacious light  
 Sate the void circumference: then shrink 420  
 Even to a point within our day and night;  
 And keep thy heart light lest it make thee sink  
 When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to the brink.

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<sup>54</sup> The English hero who, wounded unto death, passed on the cup of water to some one whose need was greater. Spenser wrote of him:—

"A sweet, attractive kind of grace,  
 A full assurance given by looks,  
 Continual comfort in a face,  
 The lineaments of gospel books."

<sup>55</sup> A Latin poet of the time of Nero. This ruler suppressed Lucan's poems. L. in a fit of resentment joined in a conspiracy against the tyrant. He was put to death. His age was about 26.

<sup>56</sup> Keats.

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulcher  
 O, not of him, but of our joy: 'tis naught <sup>57</sup> 425  
 That ages, empires, and religions there  
 Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought;  
 For such as he can lend,—they borrow not  
 Glory from those <sup>58</sup> who made the world their prey;  
 And he is gathered to the kings of thought 430  
 Who waged contention with their time's decay,  
 And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

Go thou to Rome,—at once the Paradise,  
 The grave,<sup>59</sup> the city, and the wilderness;  
 And where its wrecks like shattered mountains rise, 435  
 And flowering weeds, and fragrant copses dress  
 The bones of Desolation's nakedness  
 Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall lead  
 Thy footsteps to a slope of green access  
 Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead 440  
 A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread.

And gray walls molder round, on which dull Time  
 Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;  
 And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,  
 Pavilioning the dust of him <sup>60</sup> who planned 445

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<sup>57</sup> Nothing.

<sup>58</sup> tyrants. They have no glory to impart, to "lend." Not so, Adonais.

<sup>59</sup> "Those who say that the ruins of Rome at least are to be seen, say too much, for the ruins of so tremendous a fabric would bring more honor and reverence to her memory; here is nothing but her place of burial."—*Montaigne, 1580.*

<sup>60</sup> "Keats died at Rome, and was buried in the romantic and lonely cemetery of the Protestants under the pyramid which is the tomb of Cestius, and the mossy walls and tombs, now moldering and desolate, which formed the circuit of ancient Rome. The cemetery is an open space among the ruins, covered in winter with violets and daisies."—*From Shelley's Preface.*

This refuge for his memory, doth stand  
 Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath,  
 A field is spread, on which a newer band  
 Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp of death  
 Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished  
 breath. 450

Here pause: <sup>61</sup> these graves are all too young as yet  
 To have outgrown the sorrow which consigned  
 Its charge to each, and if the seal is set,  
 Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,  
 Break it not thou! too surely shalt thou find 455  
 Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,  
 Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter wind  
 Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.  
 What Adonais is, why fear we to become?

The One remains, the many change and pass; 460  
 Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly;  
 Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,  
 Stains the white radiance of Eternity.  
 Until Death tramples it to fragments. — Die,  
 If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek! 465  
 Follow where all is fled! — Rome's azure sky,  
 Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are weak  
 The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink, my Heart?  
 Thy hopes are gone before: from all things here 470  
 They have departed; thou shouldst now depart!  
 A light is past from the revolving year,  
 And man, and woman; and what still is dear

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<sup>61</sup> The "fond wretch" of line 416.

Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither.  
 The soft sky smiles,— the low wind whispers near; 475  
 'Tis Adonais calls! oh hasten thither,  
 No more let Life divide what Death can join together.

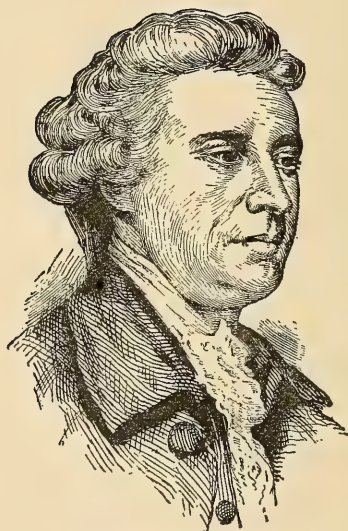
That Light whose smile kindles the Universe,  
 That Beauty in which all things work and move,  
 That Benediction which the eclipsing Curse 480  
 Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love  
 Which through the web of being blindly wove  
 By man and beast and earth and air and sea,  
 Burns bright or dim, as each <sup>62</sup> are mirrors of  
 The fire for which all thirst; now beams on me, 485  
 Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

The breath whose might I have invoked in song  
 Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven,  
 Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng  
 Whose sails were never to the tempest given; 490  
 The massy earth and spherèd skies are riven!  
 I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;  
 Whilst burning through the inmost veil of Heaven,  
 The soul of Adonais, like a star,  
 Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are. 495

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<sup>62</sup> As they each.





EDMUND BURKE



## EDMUND BURKE.

1729-1797.

WHEN the word "orator" or "oratory" is pronounced in the hearing of people who speak and *read* the English language, the name at the head of this note is likely to be the first one to come before the mind's eye.

"The only Englishmen who stand in a class with Webster are Burke, the most philosophic of orators and statesmen, and Fox, who of all the characters of history, is one of the most easily loved.

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"On the whole, I think it safe to say that Webster is not surpassed by Burke, and if he is equaled by any other English-speaking orator he is equaled by Burke alone.

"The glowing oratory of Edmund Burke will live until sensibility to beauty and the generous love of liberty shall die."—*Sentences from the Hon. Samuel W. McCall's "Webster Centennial Oration," September, 1901.*

In Macaulay's second essay on Chatham, speaking of the bill for the repeal of the Stamp Act, the writer says: "Two great orators and statesmen, belonging to two different generations, repeatedly put forth all their powers in defense of the bill. The House of Commons heard Pitt for the last time, and Burke for the first time, and was in doubt to which of them the palm of eloquence should be assigned. It was indeed a splendid sunset and a splendid dawn." Pitt, having become Lord Chatham, passed into the Upper House.

In the same charming piece of historical writing,

Macaulay makes the confident prediction: "These sound doctrines were, during a long course of years, inculcated by Burke, in orations, some of which will last as long as the English language."

The great speeches here alluded to are surely the one on *American Taxation* and that on *Conciliation with America*, discourses which form a part of every even moderately liberal course of reading in American history, and their right to be there is absolutely incontestable.

If, happily, a love of Burke be the result of these studies,—and what better thing could happen to the reader? — he will not need urging to proceed to the enjoyment of other treasures of which Burke left humanity heir, some of the greatest of which sprang from English conquest and control in India, and from that awful historic storm, the French Revolution.

Burke wrote a book upon the Sublime and Beautiful, characterized by fine esthetic taste, lofty imagination, and eloquent utterance.

After Burke had retired from public life, the king conferred a pension upon him which was made the occasion for a torrent of abuse from his enemies. His defense seems to stand alone in its type of literature and biography. It is *A Letter to a Noble Lord*.

# A Letter to a Noble Lord<sup>1</sup>

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I MY LORD: I could hardly flatter myself with the hope that so very early in the season I should have to acknowledge obligations to the Duke of Bedford and to the Earl of Lauderdale. These noble persons have lost no time in conferring upon me that sort of honor which it is alone within their competence, and which it is certainly most congenial to their natures and their manners, to bestow.

To be ill spoken of, in whatever language they speak, by the zealots of the new sect in philosophy and politics, of which these noble persons think so charitably, and of which others think so justly, to me is no matter of uneasiness or surprise. To have incurred the displeasure of the Duke of Orleans,<sup>2</sup> or the Duke of Bedford, to fall under the censure of Citizen Brissot,<sup>2</sup> or of his friend the Earl of Lauderdale, I ought to consider as proofs, not the least satisfactory, that I have produced some parts of the effect I proposed by my endeavors. I have labored hard to earn what the noble lords are generous enough to pay. Personal offense I have given them none. The part they take against me is from zeal to the cause. It is well! — it is perfectly well! I have to do homage to their justice. I have to thank the Bedfords and the Lauderdalees for having so faithfully and so fully acquitted toward me

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<sup>1</sup> Earl Fitzwilliam, nephew of Rockingham, head of the ministry of which Burke was a member.

<sup>2</sup> Prominent French revolutionists. Note the coupling of their names with the two Britons who are excoriated in this letter.

whatever arrear of debt was left undischarged by the Priestleys<sup>3</sup> and the Paines.<sup>3</sup>

2 Some, perhaps, may think them executors in their own wrong; I, at least, have nothing to complain of. They have gone beyond the demands of justice. They have been (a little, perhaps, beyond their intention) favorable to me. They have been the means of bringing out by their invectives the handsome things which Lord Grenville<sup>4</sup> has had the goodness and condescension to say in my behalf. Retired as I am from the world, and from all its affairs and all its pleasures, I confess it does kindle in my nearly extinguished feelings a very vivid satisfaction to be so attacked and so commended. It is soothing to my wounded mind to be commended by an able, vigorous, and well-informed statesman, and at the very moment when he stands forth, with a manliness and resolution worthy of himself and of his cause, for the preservation of the person and government of our sovereign, and therein for the security of the laws, the liberties, the morals, and the lives of his people. To be in any fair way connected with such things is indeed a distinction. No philosophy can make me above it; no melancholy can depress me so low as to make me wholly insensible to such an honor. Why will they not let me remain in obscurity and inaction? Are they apprehensive, that, if an atom of me remains, the sect has something to fear? Must I be annihilated, lest, like old John Zisca's,<sup>5</sup> my

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<sup>3</sup> Englishmen who had written against Burke. All Americans know Thomas Paine.

<sup>4</sup> A distinguished statesman, a cousin of William Pitt; at that time in the House of Lords he replied to the Duke of Bedford in Burke's defence.

<sup>5</sup> A military hero of Bohemia in the fourteenth century.

skin might be made into a drum, to animate Europe to eternal battle against a tyranny that threatens to overwhelm all Europe and all the human race?

3 My Lord, it is a subject of awful meditation. Before this of France, the annals of all time have not furnished an instance of a *complete* revolution. That revolution seems to have extended even to the constitution of the mind of man. It has this of wonderful in it, that it resembles what Lord Verulam <sup>6</sup> says of the operations of nature: It was perfect, not only in all its elements and principles, but in all its members and its organs from the very beginning. The moral scheme of France furnishes the only pattern ever known, which they who admire will *instantly* resemble. It is indeed an inexhaustible repertory of one kind of examples. In my wretched condition, though hardly to be classed with the living, I am not safe from them. They have tigers to fall upon animated strength. They have hyenas to prey upon carcasses. The national menagerie is collected by the first physiologists of the time; and it is defective in no description of savage nature. They pursue, even such as me, into the obscurest retreats, and haul them before their revolutionary tribunals. Neither sex, nor age — nor the sanctuary of the tomb is sacred to them. They have so determined a hatred to all privileged orders, that they deny even to the departed, the sad immunities<sup>o</sup> of the grave. They are not wholly without an object. Their turpitude<sup>o</sup> purveys<sup>o</sup> to their malice; and they unplumb<sup>7</sup> the dead for bullets to assassinate the living. If all revolutionists were not proof against all caution, I should recommend it to their

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<sup>o</sup> Francis Bacon.

<sup>7</sup> thrust them from their lead coffins.

consideration, that no persons were ever known in history, either sacred <sup>8</sup> or profane,<sup>9</sup> to vex the sepulcher, and by their sorceries, to call up the prophetic dead, with any other event,<sup>10</sup> than the prediction of their own disastrous fate.—“Leave me, oh leave me to repose!”

4 In one thing I can excuse the Duke of Bedford for his attack upon me and my mortuary <sup>o</sup> pension: He cannot readily comprehend <sup>11</sup> the transaction he condemns. What I have obtained was the fruit of no bargain, the production of no intrigue, the result of no compromise, the effect of no solicitation. The first suggestion of it never came from me, mediately or immediately, to his majesty or any of his ministers. It was long known that the instant my engagements would permit it, and before the heaviest of all calamities had forever condemned me to obscurity and sorrow, I had resolved on a total retreat. I had executed that design. I was entirely out of the way of serving or of hurting any statesman or any party, when the ministers so generously and so nobly carried into effect the spontaneous bounty of the crown. Both descriptions have acted as became them. When I could no longer serve them, the ministers have considered my situation. When I could no longer hurt them, the revolutionists have trampled on my infirmity. My gratitude, I trust, is equal to the manner in which the benefit was conferred. It came to me, indeed, at a time of life, and in a state of mind and body, in which no circumstance of fortune could

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<sup>8</sup> as Saul. 1 Samuel 28:19; 31:4.

<sup>9</sup> as Macbeth, Act IV, Scene 1.

<sup>10</sup> result.

<sup>11</sup> “What evil thing have I done that such men praise me?” I am a party to a good honest transaction; how can such a man understand it?



afford me any real pleasure. But this was no fault in the royal donor<sup>12</sup> or in his ministers, who were pleased, in acknowledging the merits of an invalid servant of the public, to assuage the sorrows of a desolate old man.

5 It would ill become me to boast of anything. It would as ill become me, thus called upon, to depreciate the value of a long life, spent with unexampled toil in the service of my country. Since the total body of my services, on account of the industry which was shown in them, and the fairness of my intentions, have obtained the acceptance of my sovereign, it would be absurd in me to range myself on the side of the Duke of Bedford and the corresponding society, or, as far as in me lies, to permit a dispute on the rate at which the authority appointed by *our* constitution to estimate such things, has been pleased to set them.

6 Loose libels ought to be passed by in silence and contempt. By me they have been so always. I knew that as long as I remained in public, I should live down the calumnies of malice, and the judgments of ignorance. If I happened to be now and then in the wrong, as who is not, like all other men, I must bear the consequence of my faults and my mistakes. The libels of the present day, are just of the same stuff as the libels of the past. But they derive an importance from the rank of the persons they come from, and the gravity of the place<sup>13</sup> where they were uttered. In some way or other I ought to take some notice of them. To assert myself thus traduced is not vanity or arrogance. It is a demand of justice; it is a demonstration of gratitude. If I am unworthy, the

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<sup>12</sup> George III.

<sup>13</sup> The House of Lords.

ministers are worse than prodigal. On that hypothesis, I perfectly agree with the Duke of Bedford.

7 For whatever I have been (I am now no more) I put myself on my country. I ought to be allowed a reasonable freedom, because I stand upon my deliverance; and no culprit ought to plead in irons. Even in the utmost latitude of defensive liberty, I wish to preserve all possible decorum. Whatever it may be in the eyes of these noble persons themselves, to me their situation calls for the most profound respect. If I should happen to trespass a little, which I trust I shall not, let it always be supposed that a confusion of characters may produce mistakes; that, in the masquerades of the grand carnival of our age, whimsical adventures happen, odd things are said and pass off. If I should fail a single point in the high respect I owe to those illustrious persons, I cannot be supposed to mean the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale of the House of Peers, but the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale of Palace Yard <sup>14</sup> — the Dukes and Earls of Brentford.<sup>15</sup> There they are on the pavement; there they seem to come nearer to my humble level, and, virtually at least, to have waived their high privilege.

8 Making this protestation, I refuse all revolutionary tribunals, where men have been put to death for no other reason than that they had obtained favors from the crown. I claim, not the letter, but the spirit of the old English law — that is, to be tried by my peers. I decline his Grace's jurisdiction as a judge. I challenge the Duke of Bedford, as a juror, to pass upon the value of

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<sup>14</sup> A place where many Englishmen had been put to death.

<sup>15</sup> Actors in a play.

my services. Whatever his natural parts may be, I cannot recognize in his few and idle years<sup>16</sup> the competence to judge of my long and laborious life. If I can help it, he shall not be on the inquest of my *quantum meruit*.<sup>17</sup> Poor rich man! he can hardly know anything of public industry in its exertions, or can estimate its compensations when its work is done. I have no doubt of his Grace's readiness in all the calculations of vulgar arithmetic; but I shrewdly suspect that he is very little studied in the theory of moral proportions, and has never learned the rule of three in the arithmetic of policy and state.

9 His Grace thinks I have obtained too much. I answer, that my exertions, whatever they have been, were such as no hopes of pecuniary reward could possibly excite; and no pecuniary compensation can possibly reward them. Between money and such services, if done by abler men than I am, there is no common principle of comparison: they are quantities incommensurable.<sup>18</sup> Money is made for the comfort and convenience of animal life. It cannot be a reward for what mere animal life must, indeed, sustain, but never can inspire. With submission to his Grace, I have not had more than sufficient. As to any noble use, I trust I know how to employ as well as he a much greater fortune than he possesses. In a more confined application, I certainly stand in need of every kind of relief and easement<sup>o</sup> much more than he does. When I say I have not received more than I deserve — is this the language I hold to Majesty? No!

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<sup>16</sup> The Duke was thirty years old.

<sup>17</sup> How much he has merited — my deserts.

<sup>18</sup> They have no common unit of measure.

Far, very far, from it! Before that presence I claim no merit at all. Everything toward me is favor and bounty. One style to a gracious benefactor; another to a proud and insulting foe.

10 His Grace is pleased to aggravate my guilt, by charging my acceptance of his Majesty's grant as a departure from my ideas, and the spirit of my conduct with regard to economy. If it be, my ideas of economy were false and ill founded. But they are the Duke of Bedford's ideas of economy I have contradicted, and not my own. If he means to allude to certain bills brought in by me on a message from the throne in 1782, I tell him, that there is nothing in my conduct that can contradict either the letter or the spirit of those acts. Does he mean the pay-office act? I take it for granted he does not. The act to which he alludes is, I suppose, the establishment act. I greatly doubt whether his Grace has never read the one or the other. The first of these systems cost me, with every assistance which my then situation gave me, pains incredible. I found an opinion common through all the offices, and general in the public at large, that it would prove impossible to reform and methodize the office of paymaster-general. I undertook it, however, and I succeeded in my undertaking. Whether the military service, or whether the general economy of our finances have profited by that act, I leave to those who are acquainted with the army, and with the treasury, to judge.

11 An opinion full as general prevailed also at the same time, that nothing could be done for the regulation of the civil-list establishment. The very attempt to introduce method into it, and any limitations to its services,

was held absurd. I had not seen the man, who so much as suggested one economical principle, or an economical expedient, upon that subject. Nothing but coarse amputation, or coarser taxation, were <sup>19</sup> then talked of, both of them without design, combination, or the least shadow of principle. Blind and headlong zeal, or factious fury, were <sup>19</sup> the whole contribution brought by the most noisy on the occasion, toward the satisfaction of the public, or the relief of the crown.

**12** Let me tell my youthful censor that the necessities of that time required something very different from what others then suggested, or what his Grace now conceives. Let me inform him that it was one of the most critical periods in our annals.

**13** Astronomers have supposed that, if a certain comet, whose path intersected the ecliptic, had met the earth in some (I forget what) sign, it would have whirled us along with it, in its eccentric course, into God knows what regions of heat and cold. Had the portentous comet of the Rights of Man (which "from its horrid hair shakes pestilence and war," and "with fear of change perplexes monarchs"), had that comet crossed upon us in that internal state of England, nothing human could have prevented our being irresistibly hurried out of the highway of heaven into all the vices, crimes, horrors, and miseries of the French Revolution.

**14** Happily, France was not then Jacobinized.<sup>20</sup> Her hostility was at a good distance. We had a limb cut off, but we preserved the body; we lost our colonies,<sup>21</sup> but we

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<sup>19</sup> *Was* would be better.

<sup>20</sup> Turned against all established order.

<sup>21</sup> American.

kept our Constitution. There was, indeed, much intestine heat; there was a dreadful fermentation. Wild and savage insurrection<sup>22</sup> quitted the woods, and prowled about our streets in the name of Reform. Such was the distemper of the public mind, that there was no madman, in his maddest ideas and maddest projects, who might not count upon numbers to support his principles and execute his designs.

15 Many of the changes, by a great misnomer called Parliamentary Reforms, went, not in the intention of all the professors and supporters of them, undoubtedly, but went in their certain, and, in my opinion, not very remote effect, home to the utter destruction of the Constitution of this kingdom. Had they taken place, not France, but England, would have had the honor of leading up the death-dance of democratic revolution. Other projects, exactly coincident in time with those, struck at the very existence of the kingdom under any Constitution. There are who remember the blind fury of some, and the lamentable helplessness of others; here, a torpid confusion, from a panic fear of the danger — there, the same inaction, from a stupid insensibility to it; here, well-wishers to the mischief — there, indifferent lookers on. At the same time, a sort of National Convention, dubious in its nature, and perilous in its example, nosed Parliament in the very seat of its authority, sat with a sort of superintendence over it, and little less than dictated to it, not only laws, but the very form and essence of legislature itself. In Ireland things ran in a still more eccentric course. Government was unnerved, confounded, and in a manner suspended. Its equipoise was totally gone.

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<sup>22</sup> Lord George Gordon's riots.



I do not mean to speak disrespectfully of Lord North.<sup>23</sup> He was a man of admirable parts, of general knowledge, of a versatile<sup>o</sup> understanding fitted for every sort of business, of infinite<sup>24</sup> wit and pleasantry, of a delightful temper, and with a mind most perfectly disinterested. But it would be only to degrade myself by a weak adulation, and not to honor the memory of a great man, to deny that he wanted something of the vigilance and spirit of command that the time required. Indeed, a darkness next to the fog of this awful day lowered over the whole region. For a little time the helm appeared abandoned.

Ipse diem noctemque negat discernere cœlo,  
Nec meminisse viæ mediâ Palinurus<sup>25</sup> in undâ.

16 At that time I was connected with men of high place in the community.<sup>26</sup> They loved liberty as much as the Duke of Bedford can do; and they understood it at least as well. Perhaps their politics, as usual, took a tincture from their character, and they cultivated what they loved. The liberty they pursued was a liberty inseparable from order, from virtue, from morals, and from religion, and was neither hypocritically nor fanatically followed. They did not wish that liberty,<sup>27</sup> in itself one of the first of blessings, should in its perversion become the greatest curse which could fall upon mankind. To preserve the

<sup>23</sup> Prime Minister from 1770 to 1782.

<sup>24</sup> "Alas, poor Yorick! — a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy." — *Hamlet*.

<sup>25</sup> Pilot of the Trojan fleet.

"Palinurus declared that he was not able to distinguish day and night, nor to remember his course over the sea."

<sup>26</sup> Fox, Lord Rockingham, Lord Shelburne.

<sup>27</sup> Unlike them of whom Milton in one of his sonnets said: —

"License they mean when they cry liberty."

Constitution<sup>28</sup> entire, and practically equal to all the great ends of its formation, not in one single part, but in all its parts, was to them the first object. Popularity and power they regarded alike. These were with them only different means of obtaining that object, and had no preference over each other in their minds, but as one or the other might afford a surer or a less certain prospect of arriving at that end. It is some consolation to me, in the cheerless gloom which darkens the evening of my life, that with them I commenced my political career, and never for a moment, in reality nor in appearance, for any length of time, was separated from their good wishes and good opinion.

17 By what accident it matters not, nor upon what desert, but just then, and in the midst of that hunt of obloquy<sup>o</sup> which ever has pursued me with a full cry through life, I had obtained a very considerable degree of public confidence. I know well enough how equivocal a test this kind of popular opinion forms of the merit that obtained it. I am no stranger to the insecurity of its tenure. I do not boast of it. It is mentioned to show, not how highly I prize the thing, but my right to value the use I made of it. I endeavored to turn that short-lived advantage to myself, into a permanent benefit to my country. Far am I from detracting from the merit of some gentlemen, out of office or in it, on that occasion. No! it is not my way to refuse a full and heaped measure of justice to the aids that I receive. I have through life been willing to give everything to others, and to reserve nothing for myself but the inward conscience that I had omitted no pains to discover, to animate, to discipline, to

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<sup>28</sup> Has Great Britain a written constitution?

direct the abilities of the country for its service, and to place them in the best light to improve their age, or to adorn it. This conscience ° I have. I have never suppressed any man, never checked him for a moment in his course, by any jealousy, or by any policy. I was always ready, to the height of my means (and they were always infinitely below my desires), to forward those abilities which overpowered my own. He is an ill-furnished undertaker <sup>29</sup> who has no machinery but his own hands to work with. Poor in my own facilities, I ever thought myself rich in theirs. In that period of difficulty and danger, more especially, I consulted and sincerely cooperated with men of all parties, who seemed disposed to the same ends, or to any main part of them. Nothing to prevent disorder was omitted: when it appeared, nothing to subdue it was left uncounselled nor unexecuted, as far as I could prevail. At the time I speak of, and having a momentary lead, so aided and so encouraged, and as a feeble instrument in a mighty hand — I do not say I saved my country; I am sure I did my country important service. There were few, indeed, that did not at that time acknowledge it; and that time was thirteen years ago. It was but one voice, that no man in the kingdom better deserved an honorable provision should be made for him.

18 So much for my general conduct through the whole of the portentous crisis from 1780 to 1782, and the general sense then entertained of that conduct by my country. But my character, as a reformer, in the particular instances which the Duke of Bedford refers to, is so connected in principle with my opinions on the hideous

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<sup>29</sup> Not a "funeral director."

changes, which have since barbarized France, and spreading thence, threaten the political and moral order of the whole world, that it seems to demand something of a more detailed discussion.

19 My economical reforms were not, as his Grace may think, the suppression of a paltry pension or employment, more or less. Economy in my plan was, as it ought to be, secondary, subordinate, instrumental. I acted on state principles. I found a great distemper in the commonwealth; and, according to the nature of the evil and of the object, I treated it. The malady was deep; it was complicated, in the causes and in the symptoms. Throughout it was full of contra-indicants.<sup>o</sup> On one hand government, daily growing more invidious<sup>o</sup> from an apparent increase of the means of strength, was every day growing more contemptible by real weakness. Nor was this dissolution confined to government<sup>o</sup> commonly so called. It extended to Parliament; which was losing not a little in its dignity and estimation, by an opinion of its not acting on worthy motives. On the other hand, the desires of the people (partly natural and partly infused into them by art), appeared in so wild and inconsiderate a manner, with regard to the economical object (for I set aside for a moment the dreadful tampering with the body of the constitution itself) that if their petitions had literally been complied with, the state would have been convulsed; and a gate would have been opened, through which all property might be sacked and ravaged. Nothing could have saved the public from the mischiefs of the false reform but its absurdity; which would soon have brought itself, and with it all real reform, into discredit. This would have left a rankling wound in the

hearts of the people, who would know they had failed in the accomplishment of their wishes, but who, like the rest of mankind in all ages, would impute the blame to anything rather than to their own proceedings. But there were then persons in the world, who nourished complaint; and would have been thoroughly disappointed if the people were ever satisfied. I was not of that humor. I wished that they *should* be satisfied.<sup>30</sup> It was my aim to give to the people the substance of what I knew they desired, and what I thought was right whether they desired it or not, before it had been modified for them into senseless petitions. I knew that there is a manifest marked distinction, which ill men, with ill designs, or weak men incapable of any design, will constantly be confounding, that is, a marked distinction between change and reformation. The former alters the substance of the objects themselves; and gets rid of all their essential good, as well as of all the accidental evil annexed to them. Change is novelty; and whether it is to operate any one of the effects of reformation at all, or whether it may not contradict the very principle upon which reformation is desired, cannot be certainly known beforehand. Reform is, not a change in the substance, or in the primary modification of the object, but a direct application of a remedy to the grievance complained of. So far as that is removed, all is sure. It stops there; and if it fails, the substance which underwent the operation, at the very worst, is but where it was.

20 All this, in effect, I think, but am not sure, I have said elsewhere. It cannot at this time be too often repeated,

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<sup>30</sup> "Tell him (Anthony), so please him come unto this place, He shall be satisfied."—*Brutus*.

line upon line, precept upon precept, until it comes into the currency of a proverb, *To innovate is not to reform*. The French revolutionists complained of everything; they refused to reform anything; and they left nothing, no, nothing at all, *unchanged*. The consequences are *before* us, not in remote history, not in future prognostication: they are about us, they are upon us. They shake the public security; they menace private enjoyment. They dwarf the growth of the young; they break the quiet of the old. If we travel, they stop our way. They infest us in town: they pursue us to the country. Our business is interrupted, our repose is troubled, our pleasures are saddened, our very studies are poisoned and perverted, and knowledge is rendered worse than ignorance by the enormous evils of this dreadful innovation. The revolution harpies of France, sprung from night and hell, or from that chaotic anarchy, which generates equivocally "all monstrous, all prodigious things," cuckoo-like, adulterously lay their eggs, and brood <sup>31</sup> over, and hatch <sup>31</sup> them in the nest of every neighboring state. These obscene harpies, who deck themselves, in I know not what divine attributes, but who in reality are foul and ravenous birds of prey (both mothers and daughters) flutter over our heads, and souse down upon our tables, and leave nothing unrent, unrifled, unravaged, or unpolluted with the slime of their filthy offal.<sup>32</sup>

**21** If his Grace can contemplate the result of this complete innovation, or, as some friends of his will call it, *reform*, in the whole body of its solidity and compound mass, at

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<sup>31</sup> The cuckoo lays her eggs in the nest of a smaller bird, to whom she leaves the "brooding" and the "hatching."

<sup>32</sup> Description taken from Virgil's *Æneid*, Book III.



which, as Hamlet says, the face of heaven glows<sup>33</sup> with horror and indignation, and which, in truth, makes every reflecting mind and every feeling heart perfectly thought-sick, without a thorough abhorrence of everything they say and everything they do, I am amazed at the morbid strength or the natural infirmity of his mind.

22 It was, then, not my love, but my hatred to innovation, that produced my plan of reform. Without troubling myself with the exactness of the logical diagram, I considered them as things substantially opposite. It was to prevent that evil that I proposed the measures which his Grace is pleased, and I am not sorry he is pleased, to recall to my recollection. I had (what I hope that noble Duke will remember in all his operations) a state to preserve, as well as a state to reform. I had a people to gratify, but not to inflame or to mislead. I do not claim half the credit for what I did as for what I prevented from being done. In that situation of the public mind, I did not undertake, as was then proposed, to new-model the House of Commons or the House of Lords, or to change the authority under which any officer of the crown acted, who was suffered at all to exist. Crown, lords, commons, judicial system, system of administration, existed as they had existed before, and in the mode and manner in which they had always existed. My measures were, what I then truly stated them to the House to be, in their intent, healing and mediatorial. A complaint was made of too much influence in the House of Commons: I reduced it in both Houses; and I gave my reasons, article by article, for every reduction, and showed why I thought it safe for

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<sup>33</sup> "With tristful visage, as against the doom."

—*Hamlet, Act III, Scene 4, line 50.*

the service of the state. I heaved the lead <sup>34</sup> every inch of way I made. A disposition to expense was complained of: to that I opposed, not mere retrenchment, but a system of economy, which would make a random expense, without plan or foresight, in future, not easily practicable. I proceeded upon principles of research to put me in possession of my matter; on principles of method to regulate it; and on principles in the human mind and in civil affairs to secure and perpetuate the operation. I conceived nothing arbitrarily; nor proposed anything to be done by the will and pleasure of others, or my own; but by reason, and by reason only. I have ever abhorred, since the first dawn of my understanding to this its obscure <sup>35</sup> twilight, all the operations of opinion, fancy, inclination, and will, in the affairs of government, where only a sovereign reason, paramount to all forms of legislation and administration, should dictate. Government is made for the very purpose of opposing that reason to will and to caprice, in the reformers or in the reformed, in the governors or in the governed; in kings, in senates, or in people.

23 On a careful review, therefore, and analysis, of all the component parts of the civil list, and on weighing them against each other, in order to make, as much as possible, all of them a subject of estimate (the foundation and corner-stone of all regular provident economy) it appeared to me evident, that this was impracticable, whilst that part, called the pension list, was totally discretionary in its amount. For this reason, and for this only, I proposed to reduce it, both in its gross quantity, and in its larger

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<sup>34</sup> A sailor's metaphor.

<sup>35</sup> Can Burke be in earnest here?

individual proportions, to a certainty: lest, if it were left without a *general* limit, it might eat up the civil list service; if suffered to be granted in portions too great for the fund, it might defeat its own end; and by unlimited allowances to some, it might disable the crown in means of providing for others. The pension list was to be kept as a sacred fund; but it could not be kept as a constant open fund, sufficient for growing demands, if some demands would wholly devour it. The tenor of the act will show that it regarded the civil list *only*, the reduction of which to some sort of estimate was my great object.

24 No other of the crown funds did I meddle with, because they had not the same relations. This of the four and a half per cent does his Grace imagine had escaped me, or had escaped all the men of business, who acted with me in those regulations? I knew that such a fund existed, and that pensions had been always granted on it, before his Grace was born. This fund was fully in my eye. It was full in the eyes of those who worked with me. It was left on principle. On principle I did what was then done; and on principle what was left undone was omitted. I did not dare to rob the nation of all funds to reward merit. If I pressed this point too close, I acted contrary to the avowed principles on which I went. Gentlemen are very fond of quoting me; but if any one thinks it worth his while to know the rules that guided me in my plan of reform, he will read my printed speech on that subject; at least what is contained from page 230 to page 241 in the second volume of the collection which a friend has given himself the trouble to make of my publications. Be this as it may, these two bills (though

achieved with the greatest labor, and management of every sort, both within and without the house) were only a part, and but a small part, of a very large system, comprehending all the objects I stated in opening my proposition, and indeed many more, which I just hinted at in my speech <sup>36</sup> to the electors of Bristol, when I was put out of that representation. All these, in some state or other of forwardness, I have long by me.

25 But do I justify his Majesty's grace on these grounds? I think them the least of my services. The time gave them an occasional <sup>37</sup> value. What I have done in the way of political economy was far from confined to this body of measures. I did not come into Parliament to con my lesson. I had earned my pension before I set my foot in St. Stephen's Chapel.<sup>38</sup> I was prepared and disciplined to this political warfare. The first session I sat in Parliament, I found it necessary to analyze the whole commercial, financial, constitutional, and foreign interests of Great Britain and its empire. A great deal was then done; and more, far more, would have been done, if more had been permitted by events. Then, in the vigor of my manhood, my constitution sunk under my labor. Had I then died (and I seemed to myself very near death), I had then earned for those who belonged to me more than the Duke of Bedford's ideas of service are of power to estimate. But, in truth, these services I am called to account for are not those on which I value myself the most. If I were to call for a reward (which I have never done), it should be for those in which, for

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<sup>36</sup> One of Burke's greatest orations.

<sup>37</sup> depending on the occasion.

<sup>38</sup> Parliament.

fourteen years without intermission,<sup>39</sup> I showed the most industry and had the least success; I mean in the affairs of India. They are those on which I value myself the most; most for the importance, most for the labor, most for the judgment, most for constancy and perseverance in the pursuit. Others may value them most for the *intention*. In that, surely, they are not mistaken.

26 Does his Grace think, that they who advised the crown to make my retreat<sup>40</sup> easy, considered me only as an economist? That, well understood, however is a good deal. If I had not deemed it of some value, I should not have made political economy an object of my humble studies, from my very early youth to near the end of my service in Parliament, even before (at least to any knowledge of mine), it had employed the thoughts of speculative men in other parts of Europe. At that time it was still in its infancy in England, where, in the last century, it had its origin. Great and learned men thought my studies were not wholly thrown away, and deigned to communicate with me now and then on some particulars of their immortal works. Something of these studies may appear incidentally in some of the earliest things I published. The House has been witness to their effect, and has profited of them more or less, for above eight and twenty years. To their estimate I leave the matter.

27 I was not, like his Grace of Bedford, swaddled, and rocked, and dandled into a legislator: "*Nitor in adversum*"<sup>41</sup> is the motto for a man like me. I possessed not one of the qualities, nor cultivated one of the arts, that

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<sup>39</sup> Referring to the impeachment of Warren Hastings, and the failure to convict.

<sup>40</sup> life in retirement.

<sup>41</sup> I struggle against opposition.

recommend men to the favor and protection of the great. I was not made for a minion or a tool. As little did I follow the trade of winning the hearts by imposing on the understandings of the people. At every step of my progress in life (for in every step was I traversed and opposed), and at every turnpike <sup>42</sup> I met, I was obliged to show my passport, and again and again to prove my sole title to the honor of being useful to my country, by a proof that I was not wholly unacquainted with its laws, and the whole system of its interests both abroad and at home. Otherwise, no rank, no toleration even, for me. I had no arts but manly arts. On them I have stood, and please God, in spite of the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale, to the last gasp <sup>43</sup> will I stand.

28 Had his Grace condescended to inquire concerning the person whom he has not thought it below him to reproach, he might have found, that, in the whole course of my life, I have never, on any pretense of economy, or any other pretense, so much as in a single instance, stood between any man and his reward of service or his encouragement in useful talent and pursuit, from the highest of those services and pursuits to the lowest. On the contrary, I have on a hundred occasions exerted myself with singular zeal to forward every man's even tolerable pretensions. I have more than once had good-natured reprehensions<sup>o</sup> from my friends for carrying the matter to something bordering on abuse. This line of conduct, whatever its merit might be, was partly owing to natural

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<sup>42</sup> toll-gate. "She now keeps with her husband a turnpike, through which I often ride."—*Thackeray*.

<sup>43</sup> "Master, go on, and I will follow thee,  
To the last gasp, with truth and loyalty."

— *As You Like It*, Act II, Scene 3.



disposition, but I think full as much to reason and principle. I looked on the consideration of public service or public ornament to be real and very justice; and I ever held a scanty and penurious justice to partake of the nature of a wrong. I held it to be, in its consequences, the worst economy in the world. In saving money I soon can count up all the good I do; but when by a cold penury I blast the abilities of a nation, and stunt the growth of its active energies, the ill I may do is beyond all calculation. Whether it be too much or too little, whatever I have done has been general and systematic. I have never entered into those trifling vexations, and oppressive details, that have been falsely and most ridiculously laid to my charge.

29 Did I blame the pensions given to Mr. Barré and Mr. Dunning between the proposition and execution of my plan? No! surely, no! Those pensions were within my principles. I assert it, those gentlemen deserved their pensions, their titles,—all they had; and if more they had, I should have been but pleased the more. They were men of talents; they were men of service. I put the profession of the law out of the question in one of them. It is a service that rewards itself. But their *public service*, though, from their abilities unquestionably of more value than mine, in its quantity and in its duration was not to be mentioned with it. But I never could drive a hard bargain in my life, concerning any matter whatever; and least of all do I know how to haggle and huckster with merit. Pension for myself I obtained none; nor did I solicit any. Yet I was loaded with hatred for everything that was withheld, and with obloquy for everything that was given. I was thus left to support the

grants of a name <sup>44</sup> ever dear to me, and ever venerable to the world, in favor of those, who were no friends of mine or of his, against the rude attacks of those who were at that time friends to the grantees, and their own zealous partisans. I have never heard the Earl of Lauderdale complain of these pensions. He finds nothing wrong till he comes to me. This is impartiality, in the true modern revolutionary style.

30 Whatever I did at that time, so far as it regarded order and economy, is stable and eternal; as all principles must be. A particular order of things may be altered; order itself cannot lose its value. As to other particulars, they are variable by time and by circumstances. Laws of regulation are not fundamental laws. The public exigencies<sup>o</sup> are the masters of all such laws. They rule the laws, and are not to be ruled by them. They who exercise the legislative power at the time must judge.

31 It may be new to his Grace, but I beg leave to tell him that mere parsimony is not economy. It is separable in theory from it; and in fact it may or it may not be a part of economy, according to circumstances. Expense, and great expense, may be an essential part in true economy. If parsimony were to be considered as one of the kinds of that virtue, there is, however, another and a higher economy. Economy is a distributive virtue, and consists, not in saving, but in selection. Parsimony requires no providence, no sagacity, no powers of combination, no comparison, no judgment. Mere instinct, and that not an instinct of the noblest kind, may produce this false economy in perfection. The other economy has larger

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<sup>44</sup> Lord Rockingham.

views. It demands a discriminating judgment, and a firm, sagacious mind. It shuts one door to impudent importunity, only to open another, and a wider, to unpresuming merit. If none but meritorious service or real talent were to be rewarded, this nation has not wanted, and this nation will not want, the means of rewarding all the service it ever will receive, and encouraging all the merit it ever will produce. No state, since the foundation of society, has been impoverished by that species of profusion. Had the economy of selection and proportion been at all times observed, we should not now have had an overgrown Duke of Bedford, to oppress the industry of humble men, and to limit, by the standard of his own conceptions, the justice, the bounty, or if he pleases, the charity <sup>45</sup> of the crown.

32 His Grace may think as meanly as he will of my deserts in the far greater part of my conduct in life. It is free for him to do so. There will always be some difference of opinion in the value of political services. But there is one merit of mine which he, of all men living, ought to be the last to call in question. I have supported with very great zeal, and I am told with some degree of success, those opinions, or, if his Grace likes another expression better, those old prejudices, which buoy up the ponderous mass of his nobility, wealth, and titles. I have omitted no exertion to prevent him and them from sinking to that level, to which the meretricious<sup>o</sup> French faction, his Grace at least coquets with, omit no exertion to reduce both. I have done all I could to discountenance their inquiries into the fortunes of those

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<sup>45</sup> Why does Burke use the term "charity"?

who hold large portions of wealth without any apparent merit of their own. I have strained every nerve to keep the Duke of Bedford in that situation which alone makes him my superior. Your lordship has been a witness of the use he makes of that pre-eminence.

33 But be it, that this is virtue! Be it, that there is virtue in this well selected rigor; yet all virtues are not equally becoming to all men and at all times. There are crimes, undoubtedly there are crimes, which in all seasons of our existence, ought to put a generous antipathy<sup>o</sup> in action; crimes that provoke an indignant justice, and call forth a warm and animated pursuit. But all things, that concern, what I may call, the preventive police of morality, all things merely rigid, harsh and censorial,<sup>o</sup> the antiquated moralists, at whose feet I was brought up, would not have thought these the fittest matter to form the favorite virtues of young men of rank. What might have been well enough, and have been received with a veneration mixed with awe and terror, from an old, severe, crabbed Cato,<sup>46</sup> would have wanted something of propriety in the young Scipios,<sup>47</sup> the ornament of the Roman nobility, in the flower of their life. But the times, the morals, the masters, the scholars have all undergone a thorough revolution. It is a vile illiberal school, this new French academy of *sans culottes*.<sup>48</sup> There is nothing in it that is fit for a gentleman to learn.

34 Whatever its vogue may be, I still flatter myself, that

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<sup>46</sup> Eminent Roman statesman, soldier, and writer. Cicero makes him one of the personages who talk in his great essay, *Cato Maior De Senectute*, The Elder Cato on Old Age.

<sup>47</sup> Men like Scipio. Cicero points to the younger Africanus as the ideal statesman. He makes him also a speaker in *De Senectute*.

<sup>48</sup> without short breeches,—applied to the Paris rabble generally.

the parents of the growing generation will be satisfied with what is to be taught to their children in Westminster, in Eton, or in Winchester: I still indulge the hope that no *grown* gentleman or nobleman of our time will think of finishing at Mr. Thelwall's lecture<sup>49</sup> whatever may have been left incomplete at the old universities of his country. I would give to Lord Grenville and Mr. Pitt for a motto, what was said of a Roman censor or prætor (or what was he), who in virtue of a *Senatus consultum* shut up certain academies,

"Cludere ludum impudentiæ jussit."<sup>50</sup>

Every honest father of a family in the kingdom will rejoice at the breaking up for the holidays, and will pray that there may be very long vacations in all such schools. 35 The awful state of the time, and not myself or my own justification, is my true object in what I now write; or in what I shall ever write or say. It little signifies to the world what becomes of such things as me, or even as the Duke of Bedford. What I say about either of us is nothing more than a vehicle, as you, my Lord, will easily perceive, to convey my sentiments on matters far more worthy of your attention. It is when I stick to my apparent first subject that I ought to apologize, not when I depart from it. I therefore must beg your Lordship's pardon for again resuming it after this very short digression; assuring you that I shall never altogether lose sight of such matter as persons abler than I am may turn to some profit.

36 The Duke of Bedford conceives that he is obliged to

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<sup>49</sup> lectureship, the office or the school of a lecturer.

<sup>50</sup> "He commanded to close the school of impudence."

call the attention of the House of Peers to his Majesty's grant to me, which he considers as excessive and out of all bounds.

37 I know not how it has happened, but it really seems, that, whilst his Grace was meditating his well-considered censure upon me, he fell into a sort of sleep. Homer <sup>51</sup> nods, and the Duke of Bedford may dream; and as dreams (even his golden dreams) are apt to be ill-pieced and incongruously° put together, his Grace preserved his idea of reproach to *me*, but took the subject matter from the crown grants to *his own* family. This is "the stuff of which his dreams are made." <sup>52</sup> In that way of putting things together his Grace is perfectly in the right. The grants to the house of Russell were so enormous as not only to outrage economy, but even to stagger credibility. The Duke of Bedford is the leviathan among all the creatures of the crown. He tumbles about his unwieldy bulk, he plays and frolics in the ocean of the royal bounty. Huge as he is, and whilst "he lies floating many a rood," <sup>53</sup> he is still a creature. His ribs, his fins, his whalebone, his blubber, the very spiracles° through which he spouts a torrent of brine against his origin, and covers me all over with the spray, everything of him and about him is from the throne. Is it for *him* to question the dispensation of the royal favor?

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<sup>51</sup> So Horace said.

<sup>52</sup> Adapted from Shakespeare's "We are such stuff as dreams are made on."

<sup>53</sup> Milton's Satan:—

"Prone on the flood, extended long and large,  
Lay floating many a rood."

— *Paradise Lost*, Book I, line 195.



38 I really am at loss to draw any sort of parallel between the public merits of his Grace, by which he justifies the grants he holds, and these services of mine, on the favorable construction of which I have obtained what his Grace so much disapproves. In private life, I have not at all the honor of acquaintance with the noble Duke; but I ought to presume,—and it costs me nothing to do so,—that he abundantly deserves the esteem and love of all who live with him. But as to public service, why, truly, it would not be more ridiculous for me to compare myself, in rank, in fortune, in splendid descent, in youth, strength, or figure, with the Duke of Bedford, than to make a parallel between his services and my attempts to be useful to my country. It would not be gross adulation but uncivil irony, to say that he has any public merit of his own to keep alive the idea of the services by which his vast landed pensions were obtained. My merits, whatever they are, are original and personal: his are derivative. It is his ancestor, the original pensioner, that has laid up this inexhaustible fund of merit which makes his Grace so very delicate and exceptionous about the merit of all other grantees of the crown. Had he permitted me to remain in quiet, I should have said, “’Tis his estate: that’s enough. It is his by law: what have I to do with it or its history?” He would naturally have said, on his side, “’Tis this man’s fortune. He is as good now as my ancestor was two hundred and fifty years ago. I am a young man with very old pensions; he is an old man with very young pensions — that’s all.”

39 Will his Grace, by attacking me, force me reluctantly to compare my little merit with that which obtained from the crown those prodigies of profuse donation by which

he tramples on the mediocrity of humble and laborious individuals? I would willingly leave him to the herald's college, which the philosophy of the *sans culottes* will abolish with contumely and scorn. These historians, recorders, and blazoners of virtues and arms, differ wholly from that other description of historians, who never assign any act of politicians to a good motive. These gentle historians, on the contrary, dip their pens in nothing but the milk of human kindness.<sup>54</sup> They seek no further for merit than the preamble<sup>55</sup> of a patent, or the inscription on a tomb. With them every man created a peer is first an hero ready made. They judge of every man's capacity for office by the offices he has filled; and the more offices the more ability. Every general officer with them is a Marlborough;<sup>56</sup> every statesman a Burleigh;<sup>57</sup> every judge a Murray<sup>58</sup> or a Yorke. They, who alive, were laughed at or pitied by all their acquaintance, make as good a figure as the best of them in the pages of Guillim,<sup>59</sup> Edmonson, and Collins. To these recorders, so full of good nature to the great and prosperous, I would willingly leave the first Baron Russell, and Earl of Bedford; and

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<sup>54</sup> "Yet I do fear thy nature;  
It is too full o' the milk of human kindness  
To catch the nearest way."

— *Macbeth*, Act I, Scene 5, lines 14-16.

<sup>55</sup> Did not Burke justify the Americans for going to war for a "preamble"? Of a different complexion, however.

<sup>56</sup> The great Captain General of the English forces — the victor at Blenheim.

<sup>57</sup> Robert Cecil, "the one minister in whom Queen Elizabeth really confided." — *Green*.

<sup>58</sup> Justice Lord Mansfield, — "How sweet an Ovid was in Murray lost!"

<sup>59</sup> Writers in Heraldry.

the merits of his grants. But the aulnager,<sup>60</sup> the weigher, the meter of grants, will not suffer us to acquiesce in the judgment of the prince reigning at the time when they were made. They are never good to those who earn them. Well then; since the new grantees have war made on them by the old, and that the word of the sovereign is not to be taken, let us turn our eyes to history, in which great men have always a pleasure in contemplating the heroic origin of their house.

40 The first peer of the name, the first purchaser of the grants, was a Mr. Russell, a person of an ancient gentleman's family, raised by being a minion of Henry the Eighth. As there generally is some resemblance of character to create these relations, the favorite was in all likelihood much such another as his master. The first of those immoderate grants was not taken from the ancient demesne of the crown, but from the recent confiscation of the ancient nobility of the land. The lion, having sucked the blood of his prey, threw the offal carcass to the jackal in waiting. Having tasted once the food of confiscation, the favorites became fierce and ravenous. This worthy favorite's first grant was from the lay nobility. The second, infinitely improving on the enormity of the first, was from the plunder of the church. In truth, his Grace is somewhat excusable for his dislike to a grant like mine, not only in its quantity, but in its kind, so different from his own.

41 Mine was from a mild and benevolent sovereign; his from Henry the Eighth.

42 Mine had not its fund in the murder of any innocent person of illustrious rank, or in the pillage of any body

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<sup>60</sup> Measurer by the ell.

of unoffending men.<sup>61</sup> His grants were from the aggregate and consolidated funds of judgments iniquitously legal, and from possessions voluntarily surrendered by the lawful proprietors with the gibbet at their door.

43 The merit of the grantee whom he derives from was that of being a prompt and greedy instrument of a *leveling* tyrant, who oppressed all descriptions of his people, but who fell with particular fury on everything that was *great and noble*. Mine has been in endeavoring to screen every man, in every class, from oppression, and particularly in defending the high and eminent, who, in the bad times of confiscating princes, confiscating chief governors, or confiscating demagogues, are the most exposed to jealousy, avarice, and envy.

44 The merit of the original grantee of his Grace's pension was in giving his hand to the work, and partaking the spoil, with a prince who plundered a part of the national church of his time and country. Mine was in defending the whole of the national church of my own time and my own country, and the whole of the national churches of all countries, from the principles and the examples, which lead to ecclesiastical pillage, thence to a contempt of *all* prescriptive titles, thence to the pillage of *all* property, and thence to universal desolation.

45 The merit of the origin of his Grace's fortune was in being a favorite and chief adviser to a prince who left no liberty to their native country. My endeavor was to obtain liberty for the municipal country in which I was born,<sup>62</sup> and for all descriptions and denominations in it. Mine

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<sup>61</sup> Alluding to Buckingham, and to the destruction of the monasteries.

<sup>62</sup> Ireland.

was to support with unrelaxing vigilance every right, every privilege, every franchise, in this my adopted, my dearer, and more comprehensive country; and not only to preserve those rights in this chief seat of empire, but in every nation, in every land, in every climate, language, and religion, in the vast domain that still is under the protection, and the larger that was once under the protection of the British crown.

46 His founder's merits were, by arts in which he served his master and made his fortune, to bring poverty, wretchedness, and depopulation on his country. Mine were under a benevolent prince, in promoting the commerce, manufactures, and agriculture of his kingdom,—in which his Majesty shows an eminent example, who even in his amusement is a patriot, and in hours of leisure an improver of his native soil.

47 His founder's merit was the merit of a gentleman raised by the arts of a court and the protection of a Wolsey<sup>63</sup> to the eminence of a great and potent lord. His merit in that eminence was, by instigating a tyrant to injustice, to provoke a people to rebellion. My merit was, to awaken the sober part of the country, that they might put themselves on their guard against any one potent lord, or any greater number of potent lords, or any combination of great leading men of any sort, if ever they should attempt to proceed in the same courses, but in the reverse order,—that is, by instigating a corrupted populace to rebellion, and, through that rebellion, introducing

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<sup>63</sup> “ In full-blown dignity see Wolsey stand,  
Law in his voice, and fortune in his hand,—  
To him the church, the realm, their powers consign,  
Through him the rays of regal bounty shine.”

—*Johnson's Vanity of Human Wishes.*



a tyranny yet worse than the tyranny which his Grace's ancestor supported, and of which he profited in the manner we behold in the despotism of Henry the Eighth. 48 The political merit of the first pensioner of his Grace's house, was that of being concerned as a counselor of state in advising, and in his person executing the conditions of a dishonorable peace with France; the surrendering the fortress of Boulogne,<sup>64</sup> then our out-guard on the continent. By that surrender, Calais,<sup>65</sup> the key of France, and the bridle in the mouth of that power, was, not many years afterward finally lost.<sup>66</sup> My merit has been in resisting the power and pride of France, under any form of its rule; but in opposing it with the greatest zeal and earnestness, when that rule appeared in the worst form it could assume; the worst indeed which the prime cause and principle of all evil could possibly give it. It was my endeavor by every means to excite a spirit in the House, where I had the honor of a seat, for carrying on with early vigor and decision, the most clearly just and necessary war, that this or any nation ever carried on; in order to save my country from the iron yoke of its power, and from the more dreadful contagion of its principles; to preserve, while they can be preserved, pure and untainted, the ancient, inbred integrity, piety, good

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<sup>64</sup> Taken by Henry VIII., but surrendered in a few years.

<sup>65</sup> Starved into surrender to Edward III. in 1347, and for over two hundred years held to be "the brightest jewel in the English crown."

<sup>66</sup> For this loss, Queen Mary knew no consolation.

"Queen Mary's saying serves for me

(When fortune's malice

Lost her, Calais) —

Open my heart, and you will see

Graved inside of it, 'Italy.' — *Browning.*



nature, and good humor of the people of England, from the dreadful pestilence which beginning in France, threatens to lay waste the whole moral, and in a great degree the whole physical world, having done both in the focus of its most intense malignity.

49 The labors of his Grace's founder merited the curses,<sup>67</sup> not loud but deep, of the Commons of England, on whom *he* and his master had effected a *complete Parliamentary reform*, by making them in their slavery and humiliation, the true and adequate representatives of a debased, degraded, and undone people. My merits were, in having had an active, though not always an ostentatious<sup>o</sup> share, in every one act, without exception, of undisputed constitutional utility in my time, and in having supported on all occasions, the authority, and efficiency, and the privileges of the Commons of Great Britain. I ended my services by a recorded and fully reasoned assertion on their own journals of their constitutional rights, and a vindication of their constitutional conduct. I labored in all things to merit their inward approbation, and (along with the assistance of the largest, and greatest, and best of my endeavors) I received their free, unbiased, public, and solemn thanks.

50 Thus stands the account of the comparative merits of the Crown grants which compose the Duke of Bedford's fortune as balanced against mine. In the name of common sense, why should the Duke of Bedford think that none but of the House of Russell are entitled to the

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<sup>67</sup> "And that which should accompany old age,  
As honor, love, obedience, troops of friends,  
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,  
Curses, not loud, but deep."

— *Macbeth*. Act V. Scene 3.

favor of the Crown. Why should he imagine that no king of England has been capable of judging of merit but King Henry the Eighth? Indeed, he will pardon me, he is a little mistaken: all virtue did not end in the first Earl of Bedford; all discernment did not lose its vision when his creator closed his eyes. Let him remit his rigor on the disproportion between merit and reward in others, and they will make no inquiry into the origin of his fortune. They will regard with much more satisfaction, as he will contemplate with infinitely more advantage, whatever in his pedigree has been dulcified<sup>68</sup> by an exposure to the influence of heaven in a long flow of generations from the hard, acidulous, metallic tincture of the spring. It is little to be doubted that several of his forefathers in that long series have degenerated<sup>68</sup> into honor and virtue. Let the Duke of Bedford (I am sure he will) reject with scorn and horror, the counsels of the lecturers, those wicked panders to avarice and ambition, who would tempt him in the troubles of his country, to seek another enormous fortune from the forfeitures of another nobility, and the plunder of another church. Let him (and I trust that yet he will) employ all the energy of his youth, and all the resources of his wealth, to crush rebellious principles which have no foundation in morals, and rebellious movements, that have no provocation in tyranny.

51 Then will be forgot the rebellions, which, by a doubtful priority in crime, his ancestor had provoked and extinguished. On such a conduct in the noble Duke, many of his countrymen might, and with some excuse might, give way to the enthusiasm of their gratitude, and in the dash-

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<sup>68</sup> "The rest to some faint meaning make pretense,  
But Shadwell never *deviates* into sense."

— Dryden's *Mac Flecknoe*, lines 19 and 20.

ing style of some of the old declaimers, cry out, that if the fates had found no other way in which they could give a Duke of Bedford and his opulence<sup>69</sup> as props to a tottering world, then the butchery of the Duke of Buckingham<sup>69</sup> might be tolerated; it might be regarded even with complacency, whilst in the heir<sup>70</sup> of confiscation they saw the sympathizing comforter of the martyrs, who suffer under the cruel confiscation of this day; whilst they beheld with admiration his zealous protection of the virtuous and loyal nobility of France, and his manly support of his brethren, the yet standing nobility and gentry of his native land. Then his Grace's merit would be pure and new, and sharp, as fresh from the mint of honor. As he pleased he might reflect honor on his predecessors, or throw it forward on those who were to succeed him. He might be the propagator of the stock of honor, or the root of it, as he thought proper.

52 Had it pleased God to continue to me the hopes of succession, I should have been, according to my mediocrity and the mediocrity of the age I live in, a sort of founder of a family: I should have left a son, who, in all the points in which personal merit can be viewed, in science, in erudition,<sup>o</sup> in genius, in taste, in honor, in generosity, in humanity, in every liberal sentiment and every liberal accomplishment, would not have shown himself inferior to the Duke of Bedford, or to any of those whom he traces in his line. His Grace very soon would have wanted all plausibility<sup>o</sup> in his attack upon that provision which belonged more to mine than to me. He would soon have supplied every deficiency, and symme-

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<sup>69</sup> Read *Henry VIII.*, Act II, Scene 1.

<sup>70</sup> Bedford.

trized every disproportion. It would not have been for that successor to resort to any stagnant, wasting reservoir of merit in me, or in any ancestry. He had in himself a salient,<sup>o</sup> living spring of generous and manly action. Every day he lived he would have repurchased the bounty of the Crown, and ten times more, if ten times more he had received. He was made a public creature, and had no enjoyment whatever but in the performance of some duty. At this exigent moment the loss of a finished man is not easily supplied.

53 But a Disposer whose power we are little able to resist, and whose wisdom it behooves us not at all to dispute, has ordained it in another manner, and (whatever my querulous<sup>o</sup> weakness might suggest) a far better. The storm has gone over me; and I lie like one of those old oaks which the late hurricane has scattered about me. I am stripped of all my honors, I am torn up by the roots, and lie prostrate on the earth. There, and prostrate there, I most unfeignedly recognize the divine justice, and in some degree submit to it. But whilst I humble myself before God, I do not know that it is forbidden to repel the attacks of unjust and inconsiderate men. The patience of Job is proverbial. After some of the convulsive struggles of our irritable nature, he submitted himself, and repented in dust and ashes. But even so I do not find him blamed for reprehending, and with a considerable degree of verbal asperity<sup>o</sup>, those ill-natured neighbors of his who visited his dunghill to read moral, political, and economical lectures on his misery. I am alone. I have none to meet my enemies in the gate.<sup>71</sup> Indeed, my lord, I greatly deceive myself if in

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<sup>71</sup> "As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children

this hard season <sup>72</sup> I would give a peck of refuse wheat for all that is called fame and honor in the world. This is the appetite but of a few. It is a luxury, it is a privilege, it is an indulgence for those who are at their ease. But we are all of us made to shun disgrace, as we are made to shrink from pain, and poverty, and disease. It is an instinct; and under the direction of reason, instinct is always in the right. I live in an inverted order. They who ought to have succeeded me are gone before me. They who should have been to me as posterity are in the place of ancestors. I owe to the dearest relation (which ever must subsist in memory) that act of piety which he would have performed to me: I owe it to him to show that he was not descended, as the Duke of Bedford would have it, from an unworthy parent.

**54** The Crown has considered me after long service: the Crown has paid the Duke of Bedford by advance. He has had a long credit for any service which he may perform hereafter. He is secure, and long may he be secure, in his advance, whether he performs any services or not. But let him take care how he endangers the safety of that Constitution which secures his own utility or his own insignificance, or how he discourages those who take up even puny arms to defend an order of things which, like the sun of heaven, shines alike on the useful and the worthless. His grants are engrafted on the public law of Europe, covered with the awful hoar<sup>o</sup> of innumerable ages. They are guarded by the sacred rules of prescrip-

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of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with [subdue] the enemies in the gate."—*Psalm 127*.

<sup>72</sup> A period of great distress in England,



tion <sup>73</sup> found in that full treasury of jurisprudence from which the jejuneness° and penury° of our municipal law has by degrees been enriched and strengthened. This prescription I had my share (a very full share) in bringing to its perfection. The Duke of Bedford will stand as long as prescriptive° law endures — as long as the great, stable laws of property, common to us with all civilized nations, are kept in their integrity, and without the smallest intermixture of the laws, maxims, principles, or precedents of the grand Revolution. They are secure against all changes but one. The whole Revolutionary system, institutes, digest, code, novels, text, gloss, comment, are not only not the same, but they are the very reverse, and the reverse fundamentally, of all the laws on which civil life has hitherto been upheld in all the governments of the world. The learned professors of the rights of man regard prescription not as a title to bar all claim set up against old possession, but they look on prescription as itself a bar against the possessor and proprietor.<sup>74</sup> They hold an immemorial possession to be no more than a long-continued, and therefore an aggravated injustice.

55 Such are *their* ideas, such *their* religion, and such *their* law. But as to *our* country, and *our* race, as long as the well-compacted structure of our church and state, the sanctuary, the holy of holies of that ancient law, defended by reverence, defended by power, a fortress at once and a temple, shall stand inviolate on the brow of the British Sion — as long as the British monarchy, not more limited

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<sup>73</sup> Title based upon immemorial use.

<sup>74</sup> That instead of "nine points," possession is not a single point.



than fenced by the orders of the State, shall, like the proud Keep <sup>75</sup> of Windsor, rising in the majesty of proportion, and girt with the double belt of its kindred and coeval<sup>o</sup> towers—as long as this awful structure shall oversee and guard the subjected land, so long the mounds and dikes of the low, fat Bedford level <sup>76</sup> will have nothing to fear from all the pickaxes of all the levelers of France. As long as our sovereign lord the king, and his faithful subjects, the lords and commons of this realm,—the triple cord which no man can break,—the solemn, sworn, constitutional frank-pledge<sup>o</sup> of this nation, the firm guarantees of each other's being and each other's rights, the joint and several securities, each in its place and order, for every kind and every quality of property and of dignity,—as long as these endure, so long the Duke of Bedford is safe, and we are all safe together, the high from the blights of envy and the spoliations of rapacity, the low from the iron hand of oppression and the insolent spurn of contempt. Amen! and so be it, and so it will be,—

“Dum domus Aeneæ Capitoli immobile saxum

Accolet, imperiumque pater Romanus habebit.” <sup>77</sup>

56 But if the rude inroad of Gallic tumult, with its sophistical rights of man to falsify the account, and its sword as a make-weight to throw into the scale, shall be introduced into our city by a misguided populace, set on by proud, great men, themselves blinded and intoxicated

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<sup>75</sup> Castle.

<sup>76</sup> This family has reclaimed an immense extent of marsh land.

<sup>77</sup> “While the house of Æneas shall dwell near the immovable rock of the Capitol, and the Roman shall hold the reins of government.”

by a frantic ambition, we shall all of us perish and be overwhelmed in a common ruin. If a great storm blow on our coast, it will cast the whales on the strand, as well as the periwinkles. His Grace will not survive the poor grantee he despises — no, not for a twelvemonth. If the great look for safety in the services they render to this Gallic cause, it is to be foolish even above the weight of privilege allowed to wealth. If his Grace be one of those whom they endeavor to proselytize, he ought to be aware of the character of the sect whose doctrines he is invited to embrace. With them insurrection is the most sacred of revolutionary duties to the state. Ingratitude to benefactors is the first of revolutionary virtues. Ingratitude is, indeed, their four cardinal virtues compacted and amalgamated into one; and he will find it in everything that has happened since the commencement of the philosophic Revolution to this hour. If he pleads the merit of having performed the duty of insurrection against the order he lives in,— God forbid he ever should! — the merit of others will be to perform the duty of insurrection against him. If he pleads — again God forbid he should! and I do not suspect he will — his ingratitude to the crown for its creation of his family, others will plead their right and duty to pay him in kind. They will laugh, indeed they will laugh, at his parchment and his wax. His deeds will be drawn out with the rest of the lumber of his evidence-room, and burnt to the tune of *Ça ira*<sup>78</sup> in the courts of Bedford (then Equality) House.

57 Am I to blame, if I attempt to pay his Grace's hostile reproaches to me with a friendly admonition to himself?

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<sup>78</sup> A revolutionary song in Paris. It is said that Franklin gave it much vogue.

Can I be blamed, for pointing out to him in what manner he is like to be affected, if the sect of the cannibal philosophers of France should proselytize any considerable part of this people, and, by their joint proselytizing arms, should conquer that government, to which his Grace does not seem to me to give all the support his own security demands? Surely it is proper, that he, and that others like him, should know the true genius of this sect; what their opinions are; what they have done; and to whom; and what (if a prognostic<sup>o</sup> is to be formed from the dispositions and actions of men) it is certain they will do hereafter. He ought to know, that they have sworn assistance, the only engagement they ever will keep, to all in this country, who bear a resemblance to themselves, and who think as such, that *The whole duty of man*<sup>79</sup> consists in destruction. They are a misallied and disparaged branch of the house of Nimrod.<sup>80</sup> They are the Duke of Bedford's natural hunters, and he is their natural game. Because he is not very profoundly reflecting, he sleeps in profound security: they, on the contrary, are always vigilant, active, enterprising, and though far removed from any knowledge, which makes men estimable or useful, in all the instruments and resources of evil, their leaders are not meanly instructed, or insufficiently furnished. In the French revolution everything is new; and, from want of preparation to meet so unlooked-for an evil, everything is dangerous. Never, before this time, was a set of literary men, con-

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<sup>79</sup> The title of a book once much read.

<sup>80</sup> "He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord."—*Genesis* 10: 9.

verted into a gang of robbers and assassins. Never before, did a den of bravoos and banditti, assume the garb and tone of an academy of philosophers.

58 Let me tell his Grace, that an union of such characters, monstrous as it seems, is not made for producing despicable enemies. But if they are formidable as foes, as friends they are dreadful indeed. The men of property in France confiding in a force, which seemed to be irresistible, because it had never been tried, neglected to prepare for a conflict with their enemies at their own weapons. They were found in such a situation as the Mexicans were, when they were attacked by the dogs, the cavalry, the iron, and the gunpowder of a handful of bearded men,<sup>81</sup> whom they did not know to exist in nature. This is a comparison that some, I think, have made; and it is just. In France they had their enemies within their houses. They were even in the bosoms of many of them. But they had not sagacity to discern their savage character. They seemed tame, and even caressing. They had nothing but *douce humanité*<sup>82</sup> in their mouth. They could not bear the punishment of the mildest laws on the greatest criminals. The slightest severity of justice made their flesh creep. The very idea that war existed in the world disturbed their repose. Military glory was no more, with them, than a splendid infamy. Hardly would they hear of self-defense, which they reduced within such bounds, as to leave it no defense at all. All this while they meditated the confiscations and massacres we have seen. Had any one told these unfortunate noblemen and gentlemen, how, and by whom, the grand fabric

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<sup>81</sup> Under "stout Cortez."

<sup>82</sup> Sweet humanity — human kindness.

of the French monarchy under which they flourished would be subverted, they would not have pitied him as a visionary, but would have turned from him as what they call a *mauvais plaisant*.<sup>83</sup> Yet we have seen what has happened. The persons who have suffered from the cannibal philosophy of France, are so like the Duke of Bedford, that nothing but his Grace's probably not speaking quite so good French, could enable us to find out any difference. A great many of them had as pompous titles as he, and were of full as illustrious a race: some few of them had fortunes as ample; several of them, without meaning the least disparagement to the Duke of Bedford, were as wise, and as virtuous, and as valiant, and as well educated, and as complete in all the lineaments of men of honor as he is. And to all this they had added the powerful out-guard of a military profession, which, in its nature, renders men somewhat more cautious than those who have nothing to attend to but the lazy enjoyment of undisturbed possessions. But security<sup>84</sup> was their ruin. They are dashed to pieces in the storm, and our shores are covered with the wrecks. If they had been aware that such a thing might happen, such a thing never could have happened.

59 I assure his Grace, that if I state to him the designs of his enemies in a manner which may appear to him ludicrous and impossible, I tell him nothing that has not exactly happened, point by point, but twenty-four miles from our own shore. I assure him that the Frenchified faction, more encouraged than others are warned by what

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<sup>83</sup> a bad pleasant; i. e., 'a social nuisance or practical joker.

<sup>84</sup> "And you all know security (without care)

Is mortal's chiefest enemy."—*Macbeth*, Act III, Scene 5.



has happened in France, look at him and his landed possessions as an object at once of curiosity and rapacity. He is made for them in every part of their double character. As robbers, to them he is a noble booty; as speculatists, he is a glorious subject for their experimental philosophy. He affords matter for an extensive analysis in all the branches of their science, geometrical, physical, civil, and political. These philosophers are fanatics. Independent of any interest, which, if it operated alone, would make them much more tractable, they are carried with such a headlong rage towards every desperate trial, that they would sacrifice the whole human race to the slightest of their experiments. I am better able to enter into the character of this description of men than the noble Duke can be. I have lived long and variously in the world. Without any considerable pretensions to literature in myself, I have aspired to the love of letters. I have lived for a great many years in habitudes<sup>85</sup> with those who professed them. I can form a tolerable estimate of what is likely to happen from a character chiefly dependent for fame and fortune on knowledge and talent, as well in its morbid and perverted state as in that which is sound and natural. Naturally men so formed and finished are the first gifts of Providence to the world. But when they have once thrown off the fear of God, which was in all ages too often the case, and the fear of man, which is now the case, and when in that state they come to understand one another, and to act in corps, a more dreadful calamity cannot arise out of hell<sup>86</sup> to scourge

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<sup>85</sup> relations.

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“Not in the legions  
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn’d  
In evils to top Macbeth.”—*Macbeth, Act IV, Scene 3.*



mankind. Nothing can be conceived more hard than the heart of a thorough-bred metaphysician. It comes nearer to the cold malignity of a wicked spirit than to the frailty and passion of a man. It is like that of the Principle of Evil himself, incorporeal, pure, unmixed, dephlegmated,<sup>o</sup> defecated<sup>o</sup> evil. It is no easy operation to eradicate humanity from the human breast. What Shakespeare calls the "compunctious visitings of nature" will sometimes knock at their hearts, and protest against their murderous speculations.<sup>87</sup> But they have a means of compounding with their nature. Their humanity is not dissolved: they only give it a long prorogation.<sup>o</sup> They are ready to declare that they do not think two thousand years too long a period for the good that they pursue. It is remarkable that they never see any way to their projected good but by the road of some evil. Their imagination is not fatigued with the contemplation of human suffering through the wild waste of centuries added to centuries of misery and desolation. Their humanity is at their horizon, and, like the horizon, it always flies before them. The geometricians and the chemists bring — the one from the dry bones of their diagrams, and the other from the soot of their furnaces — dispositions that make them worse than indifferent about those feelings and habitudes which are the supports of the moral world. Ambition is come upon them suddenly; they are intoxicated with it, and it has rendered them fearless of the danger which may from thence arise to others or to themselves. These philosophers consider men in their experiments no more than they do mice in an air-pump, or in a recipient of

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<sup>87</sup> "Thou hast no *speculation* in those eyes  
Which thou dost glare with."—*Macbeth*, Act III, Scene 4.

mephitic gas. Whatever his Grace may think of himself, they look upon him, and everything that belongs to him, with no more regard than they do upon the whiskers of that little, long-tailed animal that has been long the game of the grave, demure, insidious, spring-nailed, velvet-pawed, green-eyed philosophers, whether going upon two legs or upon four.

60 His Grace's landed possessions are irresistibly inviting to an *agrarian*<sup>88</sup> experiment. They are a downright insult upon the rights of man. They are more extensive than the territory of many of the Grecian republics, and they are, without comparison, more fertile than most of them. There are now republics in Italy, in Germany, and in Switzerland which do not possess anything like so fair and ample a domain. There is scope for seven philosophers to proceed in their analytical experiments upon Harrington's<sup>88</sup> seven different forms of republics in the acres of this one duke. Hitherto they have been wholly unproductive to speculation, fitted for nothing but to fatten bullocks, and to produce grain for beer, still more to stupefy the dull English understanding. Abbé Sieyès<sup>89</sup> has whole nests of pigeon-holes full of constitutions ready made, ticketed, sorted, and numbered, suited to every season and every fancy; some with the top of the pattern at the bottom, and some with the bottom at the top; some plain, some flowered; some distinguished for their simplicity, others for their complexity; some of blood color, some of *boue de Paris*;<sup>90</sup> some with directories, others

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<sup>88</sup> Author of *Oceana*, a work descriptive of an ideal form of government.

<sup>89</sup> One of the most prominent leaders, by his writings, of the French Revolution. A Jesuit in high office, he abjured his title.

<sup>90</sup> Paris dirt.

without a direction; some with councils of elders and councils of youngsters, some without any council at all; some where the electors choose the representatives, others where the representatives choose the electors; some in long coats, some in short cloaks; some with pantaloons, some without breeches; some with five-shilling qualifications, some totally unqualified. So that no constitution-fancier may go unsuited<sup>o</sup> from his shop, provided he loves a pattern of pillage, oppression, arbitrary imprisonment, confiscation, exile, revolutionary judgment, and legalized, premeditated murder, in any shapes into which they can be put. What a pity it is that the progress of experimental philosophy should be checked by his Grace's monopoly! Such are their sentiments, I assure him; such is their language, when they dare to speak; and such are their proceedings, when they have the means to act.

61 Their geographers, and geometricians, have been some time out of practice. It is some time since they have divided their own country into squares. That figure has lost the charms of its novelty. They want new lands for new trials. It is not only the geometricians of the republic that find him a good subject, the chemists have bespoke him after the geometricians have done with him. As the first set have an eye in his Grace's lands, the chemists are not less taken with his buildings. They consider mortar as a very anti-revolutionary invention in its present state; but properly employed, an admirable material for overturning all establishments. They have found that the gunpowder of *ruins* is far the fittest for making other *ruins*, and so *ad infinitum*. They have calculated what quantity of matter convertible into niter

is to be found in Bedford House, in Woburn Abbey, and in what his Grace and his trustees have still suffered to stand of that foolish royalist Inigo Jones,<sup>91</sup> in Covent Garden. Churches, play-houses, coffee-houses, all alike are destined to be mingled, and equalized, and blended into one common rubbish; and well sifted, and lixiviated,<sup>92</sup> to crystallize into true democratic explosive insurrectionary niter. Their academy del *Cimento* (per antiphrasin)<sup>92</sup> with Morveau and Hassenfrats at its head, have computed that the brave *sans culottes* may make war on all the aristocracy of Europe for a twelvemonth, out of the rubbish of the Duke of Bedford's buildings.

62 While the Morveaux and Priestleys<sup>93</sup> are proceeding with these experiments upon the Duke of Bedford's houses, the Sieyès, and the rest of the analytical legislators, and constitution-venders, are quite as busy in their trade of decomposing organization, in forming his Grace's vassals into primary assemblies, national guards, first, second, and third requisitioners, committees of research, conductors of the traveling guillotine, judges of revolutionary tribunals, legislative hangmen, supervisors of domiciliary visitation, exactors of forced loans, and assessors of the maximum.

63 The din of all this smithery<sup>94</sup> may some time or other possibly wake this noble Duke, and push him to an endeavor to save some little matter from their experimental philosophy. If he pleads his grants from the

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<sup>91</sup> A distinguished architect in the time of Queen Anne.

<sup>92</sup> Using a word in a sense opposite to its true one, as *Cimento*, *ciment*, *cement*, here meaning anything but a mode of uniting.

<sup>93</sup> Eminent chemists.

<sup>94</sup> hammering.—Sentence quoted in the International and Century dictionaries.

Crown, he is ruined at the outset. If he pleads he has received them from the pillage of superstitious corporations, this indeed will stagger them a little, because they are enemies to all corporations, and to all religion. However, they will soon recover themselves, and will tell his Grace, or his learned council, that all such property belongs to the *nation*; and that it would be more wise for him, if he wishes to live the natural term of a *citizen* (that is, according to Condorcet's <sup>95</sup> calculation, six months on an average), not to pass for an usurper upon the national property. This is what the *serjeants* at law of the rights of man, will say to the puny apprentices of the common law of England.

64 Is the genius of philosophy not yet known? You may as well think the garden of the Tuilleries was well protected with the cords of ribbon insultingly stretched by the national assembly to keep the sovereign canaille from intruding on the retirement of the poor king of the French,<sup>96</sup> as that such flimsy cobwebs will stand between the savages of the revolution and their natural prey. Deep philosophers are no triflers; brave *sans culottes* are no formalists. They will no more regard a Marquis of Tavistock<sup>97</sup> than an Abbot of Tavistock; the Lord of Woburn will not be more respectable in their eyes than the Prior of Woburn; they will make no difference between the superior of a Covent Garden of nuns and of a Covent Garden<sup>98</sup> of another description. They will not care a rush whether his coat is long or short; whether

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<sup>95</sup> An eminent scholar and author. Member of the assembly that put to death Louis XVI.

<sup>96</sup> Louis XVI.

<sup>97</sup> An earlier title of the Duke of Bedford.

<sup>98</sup> Here, an estate of Bedford's.



the color be purple or blue and buff. They will not trouble *their* heads, with what part of *his* head, his hair is cut from; and they will look with equal respect on a tonsure and a crop. Their only question will be that of their *Legendre*,<sup>99</sup> or some other of their legislative butchers, how he cuts up?

65 Is it not a singular phenomenon, that, whilst the *sans culottes* carcass-butchers and the philosophers of the shambles are pricking their dotted lines upon his hide, and, like the print of the poor ox that we see in the shop windows at Charing Cross, alive as he is, and thinking no harm in the world, he is divided into rumps, and sirloins, and briskets, and into all sorts of pieces for roasting, boiling, and stewing, that all the while they are measuring *him*, his Grace is measuring *me* — in invidiously comparing the bounty of the Crown with the deserts of the defender of his order, and in the same moment fawning on those who have the knife half out of the sheath? Poor innocent! —

“Pleased to the last, he crops the flowery food,  
And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood.”<sup>100</sup>

66 No man lives too long who lives to do with spirit and suffer with resignation what Providence pleases to command or inflict; but indeed, they are sharp incommodities<sup>o</sup> which beset old age.<sup>101</sup> It was but the other day, that, on putting in order some things which had been brought here, on my taking leave of London forever, I looked over a number of fine portraits, most of them of persons

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<sup>99</sup> A geometrician whose work was once much used as a text in this country.

<sup>100</sup> Pope.

<sup>101</sup> “Whatever poet, orator, or sage  
May say of it, old age is still old age.” — *Longfellow*,



now dead, but whose society, in my better days, made this a proud and happy place. Amongst these was the picture of Lord Keppel. It was painted by an artist<sup>102</sup> worthy of the subject, the excellent friend of that excellent man from their earliest youth, and a common friend of us both, with whom we lived for many years without a moment of coldness, of peevishness, of jealousy, or of jar, to the day of our final separation.

67 I ever looked on Lord Keppel as one of the greatest and best men of his age; and I loved and cultivated him accordingly. He was much in my heart, and I believe I was in his to the very last beat. It was after his trial<sup>103</sup> at Portsmouth that he gave me this picture. With what zeal and anxious affection I attended him through that his agony of glory, what part my son took in the early flush and enthusiasm of his virtue, and the pious passion with which he attached himself to all my connections, with what prodigality we both squandered ourselves in courting almost every sort of enmity for his sake, I believe he felt, just as I should have felt such friendship on such an occasion. I partook indeed of this honor, with several of the first, and best, and ablest in the kingdom, but I was behindhand with none of them; and I am sure, that if to the eternal disgrace of this nation, and to the total annihilation of every trace of honor and virtue in it, things had taken a different turn from what they did, I should have attended him to the quarter-deck<sup>104</sup> with no less

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<sup>102</sup> Reynolds.

<sup>103</sup> For his conduct of the English fleet in a fight with the French in 1778. He was acquitted, and received the thanks of Parliament.

<sup>104</sup> For execution? Richard Parker, a leading spirit in a mutiny in the British navy, was tried by court-martial and condemned. "He was executed *on board* the *Sandwich*."—*Miller*.

good will and more pride, though with far other feelings than I partook of the general flow of national joy that attended the justice that was done to his virtue.

68 Pardon, my lord, the feeble garrulity<sup>o</sup> of age, which loves to diffuse itself in discourse of the departed great. At my years, we live in retrospect alone, and, wholly unfitted for the society of vigorous life, we enjoy — the best balm to all wounds — the consolation of friendship, in those only whom we have lost forever. Feeling the loss of Lord Keppel at all times, at no time did I feel it so much as on the first day when I was attacked in the House of Lords.

69 Had he lived, that reverend form would have risen in its place, and, with a mild, parental reprehension to his nephew, the Duke of Bedford, he would have told him that the favor of that gracious Prince<sup>105</sup> who had honored his virtues with the government of the navy of Great Britain, and with a seat in the hereditary great council of his kingdom, was not undeservedly shown to the friend<sup>106</sup> of the best portion of his life, and his faithful companion and counsellor under his rudest trials. He would have told him, that, to whomever else these reproaches might be becoming, they were not decorous in his near kindred. He would have told him, that when men in that rank lose decorum, they lose everything.

70 On that day I had a loss in Lord Keppel; but the public loss of him in this awful crisis —! I speak from much knowledge of the person, he never would have listened to any compromise with the rabble rout of this *sans culotterie* of France. His goodness of heart, his

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<sup>105</sup> George III.

<sup>106</sup> Burke.

reason, his taste, his public duty, his principles, his prejudices, would have repelled him forever from all connection with that horrid medley of madness, vice, impiety, and crime.

71 Lord Keppel had two countries, one of descent, and one of birth. Their interest and their glory are the same, and his mind was capacious of both. His family was noble, and it was Dutch; that is, he was of the oldest and purest nobility that Europe can boast, among a people renowned above all others for love of their native land. Though it was never shown in insult to any human being, Lord Keppel was something high. It was a wild stock of pride, on which the tenderest of all hearts had grafted the milder virtues. He valued ancient nobility; and he was not disinclined to augment it with new honors. He valued the old nobility and the new, not as an excuse for inglorious sloth, but as an incitement to virtuous activity. He considered it as a sort of cure for selfishness and a narrow mind; conceiving that a man born in an elevated place, in himself was nothing, but everything in what went before, and what was to come after him. Without much speculation, but by the sure instinct of ingenuous feelings, and by the dictates of plain unsophisticated natural understanding, he felt, that no great commonwealth could by any possibility long subsist, without a body of some kind or other of nobility, decorated with honor, and fortified by privilege. This nobility forms the chain that connects the ages of a nation, which otherwise (with Mr. Paine) would soon be taught that no one generation can bind another. He felt that no political fabric could be well made without some such order of things as might, through a series of time, afford a rational hope of securing

unity, coherence, consistency, and stability to the state. He felt that nothing else can protect it against the levity of courts, and the greater levity of the multitude. That to talk of hereditary monarchy without anything else of hereditary reverence in the commonwealth, was a low-minded absurdity; fit only for those detestable "fools aspiring to be knaves," who began to forge in 1789, the false money of the French constitution.—That it is one fatal objection to all *new* fancied and *new fabricated* republics (among a people, who, once possessing such an advantage, have wickedly and insolently rejected it), that the *prejudice* of an old nobility is a thing that *cannot* be made. It may be improved, it may be corrected, it may be replenished: men may be taken from it, or aggregated to it, but the *thing itself* is matter of *inveterate* opinion, and therefore *cannot* be matter of mere positive institution. He felt that this nobility in fact does not exist in wrong of other orders of the state, but by them, and for them.

72 I knew the man I speak of; and, if we can divine the future, out of what we collect from the past, no person living would look with more scorn and horror on the impious parricide<sup>o</sup> committed on all their ancestry, and on the desperate attainder<sup>o</sup> passed on all their posterity, by the Orleans, and the Rochefoucaults, and the Fayette<sup>s</sup>,<sup>107</sup> and the Viscomtes de Noailles, and the false Perigords, and the long *et caetera* of the perfidious *sans culottes* of the court, who like demoniacs, possessed with a spirit of fallen pride, and inverted ambition, abdicated

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<sup>107</sup> Americans have not gone to Burke for their estimate of the Fayette.

their dignities, disowned their families, betrayed the most sacred of all trusts, and by breaking to pieces a great link of society, and all the cramps and holdings of the state, brought eternal confusion and desolation on their country. For the fate of the miscreant parricides themselves he would have had no pity. Compassion for the myriads of men, of whom the world was not worthy, who by their means have perished in prisons, or on scaffolds, or are pining in beggary and exile, would leave no room in his, or in any well-formed mind, for any such sensation. We are not made at once to pity the oppressor and the oppressed.

73 Looking to his Batavian <sup>108</sup> descent, how could he bear to behold his kindred, the descendants of the brave nobility of Holland, whose blood, prodigally poured out, had, more than all the canals, meers,<sup>o</sup> and inundations of their country, protected their independence, to behold them bowed in the basest servitude to the basest and vilest of the human race — in servitude to those who in no respect were superior in dignity, or could aspire to a better place than that of hangman to the tyrants to whose sceptered pride they had opposed an elevation of soul that surmounted and overpowered the loftiness of Castile, the haughtiness of Austria, and the overbearing arrogance of France!

74 Could he with patience bear, that the children of that nobility, who would have deluged their country and given it to the sea, rather than submit to Louis XIV. who was then in his meridian glory, when his arms were conducted by the Turennes,<sup>109</sup> by the Luxembourgs, by the Boufflers;

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<sup>108</sup> Dutch.

<sup>109</sup> Royalist leaders.



when his councils were directed by the Colberts, and the Louvois; when his tribunals were filled by the Lamoignons and the Daguesseaus — that these should be given up to the cruel sport of the Pichegrus,<sup>110</sup> the Jourdans, the Santerres, under the Rollands, and Brissots, and Goras, and Robespierres, the Reubels, the Carnots, and Talliens and Dantons, and the whole tribe of regicides, robbers, and revolutionary judges, that, from the rotten carcass of their own murdered country, have poured out innumerable swarms of the lowest, and at once the most destructive of the classes of animated nature, which like columns of locusts, have laid waste the fairest part of the world.

75 Would Keppel have borne to see the ruin of the virtuous patricians, that happy union of the noble and the burgher, who, with signal prudence and integrity, had long governed the cities of the confederate republic, the cherishing fathers of their country, who, denying commerce to themselves, made it flourish in a manner unexampled under their protection? Could Keppel have borne that a vile faction should totally destroy this harmonious construction in favor of a robbing democracy founded on the spurious rights of man?

76 He was no great clerk, but he was perfectly well versed in the interests of Europe; and he could not have heard with patience that the country of Grotius,<sup>111</sup> the cradle of the law of nations, and one of the richest repositories of all law, should be taught a new code by the

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<sup>110</sup> Republican leaders.

<sup>111</sup> "A member of the States of Holland and the States-General, jurist, advocate, poet, scholar, historian, . . . he stood famous among a crowd of famous contemporaries."—*Motley's Barneveld*.



ignorant flippancy of Thomas Paine, the presumptuous foppery of La Fayette, with his stolen rights of man in his hand, the wild, profligate intrigue and turbulency of Marat, and the impious sophistry of Condorcet in his insolent addresses to the Batavian Republic.

77 Could Keppel, who idolized the House of Nassau,<sup>112</sup> who was himself given to England along with the blessings of the British and Dutch Revolutions, with revolutions of stability, with revolutions which consolidated and married the liberties and the interests of the two nations forever — could he see the fountain of British liberty itself in servitude to France? Could he see with patience a Prince of Orange expelled as a sort of diminutive despot, with every kind of contumely, from the country<sup>113</sup> which that family of deliverers had so often rescued from slavery, and obliged to live in exile in another country,<sup>114</sup> which owes its liberty to his house?

78 Would Keppel have heard with patience, that the conduct to be held on such occasions was to become short by the knees<sup>115</sup> to the faction of the homicides, to entreat them quietly to retire? or if the fortune of war should drive them from their first wicked and unprovoked invasion, that no security should be taken, no arrangement made, no barrier formed, no alliance entered into for the security of that, which under a foreign name<sup>116</sup> is the most precious part of England? What would he have said, if it was even proposed that the Austrian Nether-

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<sup>112</sup> From which came William the Silent and William III. of England.

<sup>113</sup> Holland.

<sup>114</sup> England.

<sup>115</sup> "Short by the knees, entreat for peace."—*Swift*.

<sup>116</sup> Hanover?

lands (which ought to be a barrier to Holland, and the tie of an alliance, to protect her against any species of rule that might be erected, or even be restored in France) should be formed into a republic under her influence, and dependent upon her power?

79 But, above all, what would he have said if he had heard it made a matter of accusation against me by his nephew, the Duke of Bedford, that I was the author of the war? Had I a mind to keep that high distinction to myself (as from pride I might, but from justice I dare not), he would have snatched his share of it from my hand, and held it with the grasp of a dying convulsion to his end.<sup>117</sup>

80 It would be a most arrogant presumption in me to assume to myself the glory of what belongs to his Majesty, and to his ministers, and to his Parliament, and to the far greater majority of his faithful people; but, had I stood alone to counsel, and that all were determined to be guided by my advice, and to follow it implicitly, then I should have been the sole author of a war. But it should have been a war on my ideas and my principles. However, let his Grace think as he may of my demerits with regard to the *war* with Regicide, he will find my guilt confined to that alone. He never shall, with the smallest color of reason, accuse me of being the author of a *peace* with Regicide. But that is high matter, and ought not to be mixed with anything of so little moment as what may belong to me, or even to the Duke of Bedford.

I have the honor to be, etc.,

EDMUND BURKE.

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<sup>117</sup> Sir Edward Keppel is to-day (1902) the senior rear admiral of the world's navies.





JOHN MILTON

## JOHN MILTON.

1608-1674.

MILTON! thou shouldst be living at this hour;  
England hath need of thee. She is a fen  
Of stagnant waters; altar, sword, and pen,  
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,  
Have forfeited their ancient English dower  
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;  
O, raise us up, return to us again,  
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power!  
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart;  
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:  
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free;  
So didst thou travel on life's common way  
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart  
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

— *Wordsworth.*

"Are the noblest minds moody and mournful as Dante is described to have been? Rather they:

'bate no jot  
Of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer  
Right onward?'

"Thus did John Milton, whom with Mr. Landor I cannot help honoring and admiring above any other poet of past times except Shakespeare."— *Coleridge.*

"We owe the great writers of the golden age of our literature to that fervid awakening of the public mind which shook to dust the oldest and most oppressive form of the Christian religion. We owe Milton to the progress and development of the same spirit: the sacred Milton

was, be it remembered, a republican and a bold inquirer into morals and religion."—*Shelley*.

"If you scruple to give the title of an epic poem to the *Paradise Lost* of Milton, call it, if you choose, a Divine poem; give it whatever name you please, provided you confess that it is a work as admirable in its kind as the *Iliad*."—*Addison*.

In Mr. Lowell's essay on Milton, in *Among My Books*, there is a passage giving our American critic's opinion in a comparative way of certain poets' skill in constructing blank-verse. Lowell thought that Milton's long practice in prose, English and Latin "helped him to give that variety of pause and that majestic harmony to his blank-verse which have made it so unapproachably his own. Landor, who, like Milton, seems to have thought in Latin, has caught somewhat more than others of the dignity of his gait, but without his length of stride. Wordsworth, at his finest, has perhaps approached it, but with how long an interval! Bryant has not seldom attained to its serene equanimity but never emulates its pomp. Keats has caught something of its large utterance, but altogether fails of its nervous severity of phrase. Cowper's muse (that moved with such graceful ease in slippers) becomes stiff when (in his translation of Homer) she buckles on her feet the cothurnus of Milton."

I do not believe that it will spoil for our readers the specimen of Milton's handiwork about to be presented, should I quote here from Dr. Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* his exceedingly sour characterization thereof. The space given to Milton is forty pages in fine type. It is well worth the reading, and will stimulate the reader's independence of judgment. We must carry with us the



fact that Milton was a rebel against Charles I. and wrote a treatise justifying his death by the headsman's axe, and that Johnson was a tory of tories. Indeed, strangely apropos, there lies a magazine upon my table an article in which presents ground for a presumption that Johnson's loyalty caused him to tarry for a time in the camp of "Prince Charlie." But to return to what Johnson said:—

"One of the poems on which much praise has been bestowed is *Lycidas*; of which the diction is harsh, the rhymes uncertain, and the numbers unpleasing. What beauty there is we must therefore seek in the sentiments and images. It is not to be considered as the effusion of real passion; for passion runs not after remote allusions and obscure opinions. Passion plucks no berries from the myrtle and ivy, nor calls upon Arethuse and Mincius, nor tells of rough satyrs and fauns with cloven heel. Where there is leisure for fiction there is little grief.

\* \* \*

"Such is the power of reputation justly acquired, that its blaze drives away the eye from nice examination. Sure no man could have fancied that he read *Lycidas* with pleasure, had he not known the author."

In spite of the great lexicographer's adverse opinion so confidently expressed, the reading world will write "approved" beneath another opinion, copied from a life of Milton, 1836, author not named.

"In 1645, was published a collection of his poems, the principal of which are *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity*, *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, *Lycidas*, *The Mask (Comus)*, etc., and if he had left no other monuments of

his poetical genius behind him, these would have been sufficient to render his name immortal."

In using either of our great dictionaries he whose eye is observant will be constantly coming upon lines of the five poems named and valued in the last paragraph. I believe that these classics are used more frequently than the same number of pages found anywhere else in our literature; chosen, I mean, by the lexicographer to show what words mean. Intimate acquaintance with such models cannot be too highly commended.

# Lycidas<sup>1</sup>

---

YET once more, O ye laurels, and once more  
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sear,  
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude  
And with forc'd fingers rude,  
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year. 5  
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,  
Compels<sup>2</sup> me to disturb your season due:  
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,  
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.  
Who would not sing for Lycidas? He knew,<sup>3</sup> 10  
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.  
He must not float upon his wat'ry bier  
Unwept, and welter<sup>o</sup> to the parching wind,  
Without the meed of some melodious tear.  
Begin then, Sisters<sup>4</sup> of the sacred well, 15  
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring.  
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.  
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse;  
So may some gentle Muse  
With lucky words favor my destin'd urn,<sup>5</sup> 20  
And, as he passes, turn,  
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.

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<sup>1</sup> A poetic name for Mr. Edward King, a college mate and intimate friend of Milton, who, on his voyage, 1637, to visit relatives in Ireland was drowned.

<sup>2</sup> It is three years since Milton has written a poem. He thinks himself now not ready, but this sad event demands it of him.

<sup>3</sup> King was a poet.

<sup>4</sup> Muses.

<sup>5</sup> grave.

“let him be regarded  
As the most noble corse that ever herald  
Did follow to his urn.”— *Coriolanus*, Act V, Scene 6.

For we were nurst upon the self-same hill,  
Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill.

Together both, ere the high lawns <sup>6</sup> appear'd 25  
Under the opening eyelids <sup>7</sup> of the morn  
We drove afield, and both together heard  
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,  
Batt'ning our flocks with the fresh dews of night,  
Oft till the Star <sup>8</sup> that rose, at ev'ning, bright 30  
Toward Heav'n's descent had slop'd his westering wheel.  
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,<sup>9</sup>  
Temper'd to th' oaten flute,  
Rough Satyrs danc'd, and Fauns with clov'n heel  
From the glad sound would not be absent long, 35  
And old Damætas lov'd to hear our song.

But O <sup>10</sup> the heavy change, now thou art gone,  
Now thou art gone, and never must return!  
Thee Shepherd, thee the woods, and desert caves  
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown, 40  
And all their echoes mourn.  
The willows, and the hazel copses green,  
Shall now no more be seen,  
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.  
As killing as the canker to the rose, 45  
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,  
Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,

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<sup>6</sup> open spaces in the woods.

"To meet the sun upon the upland lawn."—*Gray*.

<sup>7</sup> If "jocund day" can "stand tiptoe," he can open his eyes.

<sup>8</sup> Jupiter, possibly, or some prominent *star*.

<sup>9</sup> We sang. Of course Milton and his friend were not singing "afield," but in their room, engaged either in work or recreation.  
"Fauns, etc.," are the other students or professors.

<sup>10</sup> But she is in her grave, and oh!

The difference to me! —*Wordsworth*.

When first the white-thorn blows;  
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs,<sup>11</sup> when the remorseless  
deep 50

Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd Lycidas?  
For neither were ye playing on the steep,  
Where your old Bards, the famous Druids, lie,  
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,  
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream: 55  
Ay me, I fondly<sup>12</sup> dream!

Had ye been there — for what could that have done?  
What could the Muse herself, that Orpheus bore,  
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,  
Whom universal nature did lament, 60  
When by the rout<sup>13</sup> that made the hideous roar,  
His gory visage down the stream was sent,  
Down the swift Hebrus<sup>14</sup> to the Lesbian shore?

Alas! what boots it with uncessant care  
To tend the homely slighted shepherd's trade,<sup>15</sup> 65  
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?  
Were it not better done as others use,  
To sport with Amaryllis<sup>16</sup> in the shade,  
Or with the tangles of Neæra's<sup>17</sup> hair?  
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise 70

<sup>11</sup> "Where wert thou mighty Mother, when he lay,  
When thy son lay, pierced by the shaft which flies  
In darkness? where was lorn Urania  
When Adonais died?"—*Shelley*.

<sup>12</sup> foolishly. "Fond impious man!"—*Gray*.

<sup>13</sup> The Thracian women who tore Orpheus to pieces. His head  
was carried by the river to the sea, and thus reached the island of  
Lesbos.

<sup>14</sup> "*Hebrum bibamus*."—*Virgil*.

<sup>15</sup> In this pastoral, to write poetry.

<sup>16</sup> <sup>17</sup> The woods in Virgil's *Eclogues* resound with their names.

(That last infirmity of noble mind)  
 To scorn delights, and live laborious days;  
 But the fair guerdon° when we hope to find,  
 And think to burst <sup>18</sup> out into sudden blaze,  
 Comes the blind Fury with th' abhorred shears, 75  
 And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"  
 Phœbus replied, and touch'd my trembling ears;  
 "Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,  
 Nor in the glistening foil  
 Set off to th' world, nor in broad rumor lies; 80  
 But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,  
 And perfe't witness of all-judging Jove;  
 As he pronounces lastly on each deed,  
 Of so much fame in Heav'n expect thy meed." <sup>19</sup>  
 O fountain Arethuse, and thou honor'd flood, 85  
 Smooth-sliding Mincius, crown'd with vocal reeds  
 That strain I heard <sup>20</sup> was of a higher mood;  
 But now my oat <sup>21</sup> proceeds,  
 And listens to the Herald of the Sea  
 That came in Neptune's plea; <sup>22</sup> 90  
 He ask'd the waves, and ask'd the felon <sup>22a</sup> winds,  
 What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain?  
 And question'd every gust <sup>23</sup> of rugged wings  
 That blows from off each beaked promontory:  
 They knew not of his story, 95

<sup>18</sup> When we hope to find the fair reward, to "wake and find ourselves famous," then comes the Fury, etc.

<sup>19</sup> Hence "it were not better done, etc." — *Line 66.*

<sup>20</sup> from Phœbus-Apollo.

<sup>21</sup> *Line 33.*

<sup>22</sup> in Neptune's stead to conduct an inquiry.

<sup>22a</sup> Why "felon"?

<sup>23</sup> every rude-winged gust.

"The wind,

Wing-weary with its long flight." — *Whittier.*



And sage Hippotades <sup>24</sup> their answer brings,  
 That not a blast was from his dungeon <sup>25</sup> stray'd;  
 The air was calm, and on the level brine  
 Sleek Panope <sup>26</sup> with all her sisters play'd.  
 It was that fatal and perfidious bark, <sup>27</sup> 100  
 Built in th' eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,  
 That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

Next Camus, <sup>28</sup> reverend sire, went footing slow,  
 His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,  
 Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge 105  
 Like to that sanguine flow'r <sup>29</sup> inscrib'd with woe.  
 Ah! Who hath reft (quoth he) my dearest pledge?  
 Last came, and last did go,  
 The Pilot <sup>30</sup> of the Galilean lake;  
 Two massy keys he bore of metals twain, 110  
 (The golden opes, the iron shuts amain)  
 He shook his mitered locks, and stern bespake;  
 "How well could I have spar'd for thee, <sup>31</sup> young swain,  
 Enow of such as for their bellies' sake  
 Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold? 115  
 Of other care they little reck'ning make,  
 Then how to scramble at the shearer's feast,

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<sup>24</sup> Æolus, who jailed the winds in a vast cave.

<sup>25</sup> "In a cavern under is fettered the thunder."—*Shelley*.

<sup>26</sup> She that came from under the deep waves to answer the prayer of Cloanthus (*Æneid* V, line 240), and helped him win the great boat race.

<sup>27</sup> Are these lines part of Æolus's plea of not guilty?

<sup>28</sup> God of the Cam.

<sup>29</sup> The hyacinth. When Hyacinth was slain, his blood marked the herbage; a flower arose, in shape like a lily, and Apollo, who was performing this miracle, wrote a note of woe upon the leaves.—*Ovid*.

<sup>30</sup> St. Peter.

<sup>31</sup> King had chosen the ministry for his profession.

And shove away the worthy bidden guest;  
 Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold  
 A sheep-hook, or have learn'd ought else the least 120  
 That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!  
 What reck's <sup>32</sup> it them? What need they? They are  
     sped°;

And when they list, their lean and flashy songs  
 Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw,  
 The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed, 125  
 But swoln with wind and the rank mist they draw,  
 Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread;  
 Besides what the grim wolf <sup>33</sup> with privy paw  
 Daily devours apace, and nothing said:  
 But that two-handed engine <sup>33</sup> at the door 130  
 Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."

Return, Alpheus, the dread voice is past,  
 That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,  
 And call the vales, and bid them hither cast  
 Their bells, and flourets of a thousand hues. 135  
 Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use, <sup>34</sup>  
 Of shades and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,  
 On whose fresh lap the swart star <sup>35</sup> sparely looks,  
 Throw hither all your quaint enamel'd eyes, <sup>36</sup>  
 That on the green turf suck the honied showres, 140  
 And purple all the ground with vernal flowres.  
 Bring the rathe <sup>37</sup> primrose that forsaken dies,  
 The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,

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<sup>32</sup> Impersonal. What care they?

<sup>33</sup> There is a wide divergence of opinion as to what evil things  
 St. Peter was pointing to. Luckily, the Muse here returns.

<sup>34</sup> dwell.

<sup>35</sup> The dog star.

<sup>36</sup> blooms.

<sup>37</sup> early; "rathe," the positive degree of "rather."

The white pink, and the pansy freakt with jet,  
 The glowing violet, 145  
 The musk-rose, and the well-attir'd woodbine,  
 With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,  
 And every flower that sad embroidery wears:  
 Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,  
 And daffodillies fill their cups with tears, 150  
 To strew the laureate hearse <sup>38</sup> where Lycid lies.  
 For so to interpose a little ease,  
 Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.<sup>39</sup>  
 Ay me! Whilst thee the shores and sounding <sup>40</sup> seas  
 Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurl'd, 155  
 Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,  
 Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide  
 Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous <sup>40a</sup> world;  
 Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,  
 Sleep'st by the fable <sup>41</sup> of Bellerus old, 160  
 Where the great vision <sup>42</sup> of the guarded mount  
 Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's <sup>43</sup> hold;  
 Look homeward Angel now, and melt with ruth,  
 And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.  
 Weep no more, woful Shepherds, weep no more, 165  
 For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,  
 Sunk though he be beneath the wat'ry floor;  
 So sinks the day-star <sup>44</sup> in the ocean bed,

<sup>38</sup> Having on it the laurels of a poet. See line 11.

<sup>39</sup> Imagining the coffin of Lycidas present.

"While all his men

Gazed at each other with a wild surmise,  
 Silent upon a peak of Darien."—*Keats*.

<sup>40</sup> "*pelago sonanti*."—*Virgil*. <sup>40a</sup> peopled with monsters.

<sup>41</sup> fabled land.

<sup>42</sup> apparition.

<sup>43</sup> points seaward.

<sup>44</sup> the sun.

And yet anon repairs his drooping head,  
 And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore <sup>44a</sup> 170  
 Flames in the forehead of the morning sky.  
 So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,  
 Thro' the dear might of him that walk'd the waves,  
 Where other groves, and other streams along,  
 With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves, 175  
 And hears the unexpressive <sup>45</sup> nuptial song,  
 In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.  
 There entertain him all the saints above,  
 In solemn troops, and sweet societies,  
 That sing, and singing in their glory move, 180  
 And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.  
 Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;  
 Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,  
 In thy large recompense, <sup>46</sup> and shalt be good  
 To all that wander in that perilous flood. 185

Thus sang the uncouth <sup>47</sup> swain <sup>48</sup> to th' oaks and rills,  
 While the still morn went out with sandals gray;  
 He touch'd the tender stops of various quills,  
 With eager thought warbling his Doric lay;  
 And now the sun had stretch'd out all the hills, 190  
 And now was dropt into the western bay;  
 At last he rose, and twitch'd his mantle blue,  
 To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

<sup>44a</sup> a precious metal,—“like some ore  
 Among a mineral of metals base  
 Shows itself pure.”—*Hamlet, Act IV, Scene 1.*

<sup>45</sup> beyond the power to express.

<sup>46</sup> great reward.

<sup>47</sup> odd, not cultured.

<sup>48</sup> The “I” of line 3.





WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR



## WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

1775-1864.

LANDOR lived a long life, began to write early and wrote late, both prose and verse.

A large part of his prose is in the form of *Imaginary Conversations*. These conversations are between scholars of all ages. Some of them, as in the *Pentameron*, where Boccaccio and Petrarch are the chief interlocutors, and not a few of the separate conversations, "are altogether unparalleled in any other language, and not easy to parallel in English."

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"In particular, Landor is remarkable — and, excellent as are many of the prose writers whom we have had since, he is perhaps the most remarkable — for the weight, the beauty, and the absolute finish of his phrase."— *Saintsbury's A History of 19th Century Literature*.

"So many of the most sensitive and discriminating critics of this century have, in the suffrage for fame, listed themselves for Landor, that it is no longer permissible for men interested in the things of the mind to neglect him. He seemed almost to achieve immortality within his lifetime, so continuously was the subtle appreciation of the best yielded to him, from the far-off years when Shelley used at Oxford, to declaim with enthusiasm passages from *Gebir*, to the time, that seems as yesterday, when Swinburne made his pilgrimage to Italy, to offer his tribute of adoration to the old man at the close of his solitary and troubled career; and still each finer spirit,

“ ‘ As he passes, turns,  
And bids fair peace be to his sable shroud.’ ”

— G. E. Woodbury in *The Atlantic Monthly*.

Of Landor's poetry, a drama, *Count Julian*, has many admirers. *Gebir*, the poem which Shelley grew enthusiastic over, is a tale whose aim is a rebuke of the ambition of tyrants. It is also a story of the loves of Tamar and the Nymph, of Gebir and Choraba.

It contains faultless passages, as the lines descriptive of the sea-shell which Wordsworth seems to have consciously or unconsciously “ adapted.” Whether to the betterment of the passage is a matter of taste.

Said the “ nymph divine ” to Tamar, the brother of Gebir : —

But I have sinuous shells of pearly hue  
Within, and they that luster have imbibed  
In the sun's palace porch, where when unyoked  
His chariot-wheel stands midway in the wave.  
Shake one and it awakens, then apply  
Its polished lips to your attentive ear,  
And it remembers its august abodes,  
And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there.

Lines of rich full tone are scattered through the poem : —

1. Oh, for the spirit of that matchless man  
Whom Nature led throughout her whole domain.  
Though panting in the play-hour of my youth  
I drank of Avon, too, a dangerous draught,  
That roused within the feverish thirst of song.
2. Here also those who boasted of their zeal,  
And loved their country for the spoils it gave.
3. Fears, like the needle verging to the pole,  
Tremble and tremble into certainty.

4. The silent oars now dip their level wings,  
And weary with strong stroke the whitening wave
5. Go, from their midnight darkness wake the woods,  
Woo the lone forest in her last retreat.

Like Charles James Fox, Landor beheld in the French Revolution and in Bonaparte's early victories the hope of the world. Its later chapters led him, as they did Coleridge and Wordsworth, into the other camp. With Landor this was a literal leading, as he paid for the equipment of one thousand soldiers, and with them joined the Spanish army to resist Napoleon.



## Southey<sup>1</sup> and Porson<sup>2</sup>

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*Porson.* I suspect, Mr. Southey, you are angry with me for the freedom with which I have spoken of your poetry and Wordsworth's.

*Southey.* What could have induced you to imagine it, Mr. Professor? You have indeed bent your eyes upon me, since we have been together, with somewhat of fierceness and defiance: I presume you fancied me to be a commentator. You wrong me in your belief that any opinion on my poetical works hath molested me; but you afford me more than compensation in supposing me acutely sensible of injustice done to Wordsworth. If we must converse on these topics, we will converse on him. What man ever existed who spent a more inoffensive life, or adorned it with nobler studies?

*Porson.* I believe so; and they who attack him with virulence are men of as little morality as reflection. I have demonstrated that one of them, he who wrote the *Pursuits of Literature*, could not construe a Greek sentence or scan a verse; and I have fallen on the very *Index* from which he drew out his forlorn hope on the parade. This is incomparably the most impudent fellow I have met with in the course of my reading, which has lain, you know, in a province where impudence is no rarity.

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<sup>1</sup> The third of what Saintsbury calls "a curiously dissimilar trio," Wordsworth and Coleridge being, of course, the first and second. He wrote abundant prose, his *Nelson* being regarded a model piece of biographical work, and abundant poetry.

<sup>2</sup> His name stands for Greek scholarship—"the greatest philologist of the age," said Macaulay; "sulky, abusive, and intolerable," said Byron.

I had visited a friend in *King's Road* when he entered.

"Have you seen the *Review*?" cried he. "Worse than ever! I am resolved to insert a paragraph in the papers, declaring that I had no concern in the last number."

"Is it so very bad?" said I, quietly.

"Infamous! detestable!" exclaimed he.

"Sit down, then: nobody will believe you," was my answer.

Since that morning he has discovered that I drink harder<sup>3</sup> than usual, that my faculties are wearing fast away, that once, indeed, I had some Greek in my head, but — he then claps the forefinger to the side of his nose, turns his eye slowly upward, and looks compassionately and calmly.

*Southey*. Come, Mr. Porson, grant him his merits: no critic is better contrived to make any work a monthly one, no writer more dexterous in giving a finishing touch.

*Porson*. The plagiarist<sup>4</sup> has a greater latitude of choice than we; and if he brings home a parsnip or turnip-top, when he could as easily have pocketed a nectarine or a pineapple, he must be a blockhead. I never heard the name of the *Pursuer of Literature*, who has little more merit in having stolen than he would have had if he had never stolen at all; and I have forgotten that other man's, who evinced his fitness to be the censor<sup>o</sup> of our age, by a translation of the most naked and impure satires of antiquity — those of Juvenal, which owe their preservation to the partiality of the Friars. I shall entertain an un-

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<sup>3</sup> "Porson would drink ink rather than not drink at all." — *Horne Tooke*.

<sup>4</sup> One who claims to be the author of something he did not write.



favorable opinion of him if he has translated them well: pray, has he?

*Southey.* Indeed, I do not know. I read poets for their poetry, and to extract that nutriment of the intellect and of the heart which poetry should contain.<sup>5</sup> I never listen to the swans of the cesspool, and must declare that nothing is heavier to me than rottenness and corruption.

*Porson.* You are right, sir, perfectly right. A translator of *Juvenal* would open a public drain to look for a needle, and may miss it. My nose is not easily offended; but I must have something to fill my belly. Come, we will lay aside the scrip of the transpositor<sup>6</sup> and the pouch of the pursuer, in reserve for the days of unleavened bread; and again, if you please, to the lakes and mountains.<sup>7</sup> Now we are both in better humor, I must bring you to a confession that in your friend Wordsworth there is occasionally a little trash.

*Southey.* A haunch of venison would be trash to a Brahmin, a bottle of Burgundy to the xerif<sup>o</sup> of Mecca. We are guided by precept, by habit, by taste, by constitution. Hitherto our sentiments on poetry have been delivered down to us from authority; and if it can be demonstrated, as I think it may be, that the authority is inadequate, and that the dictates are often inapplicable and often misinterpreted, you will allow me to remove the cause out of court. Every man can see what is very bad in a poem; almost every one can see what is very good: but you, Mr. Porson, who have turned over all the volumes of all the commentators, will inform me whether

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<sup>5</sup> Well to do.

<sup>6</sup> transposer. The Imperial Dictionary quotes this clause.

<sup>7</sup> This is, back to the Lake School's head.

I am right or wrong in asserting that no critic hath yet appeared who hath been able to fix or to discern the exact degrees of excellence above a certain point.

*Porson.* None.

*Southey.* The reason is, because the eyes of no one have been upon a level with it. Supposing, for the sake of argument, the contest of Hesiod and Homer to have taken place: the judges who decided in favor of the worse, and he, indeed, in the poetry has little merit, may have been elegant, wise, and conscientious men. Their decision was in favor of that to the species of which they had been the most accustomed. Corinna<sup>8</sup> was preferred to Pindar<sup>8</sup> no fewer than five times, and the best judges in Greece gave her the preference; yet whatever were her powers, and beyond a question they were extraordinary, we may assure ourselves that she stood many degrees below Pindar. Nothing is more absurd than the report that the judges were prepossessed by her beauty. Plutarch tells us that she was much older than her competitor, who consulted her judgment in his earlier odes. Now, granting their first competition to have been when Pindar was twenty years old, and that the others were in the years succeeding, her beauty must have been somewhat on the decline; for in Greece there are few women who retain the graces, none who retain the bloom of youth, beyond the twenty-third year. Her countenance, I doubt not, was expressive: but expression, although it gives beauty to men, makes women pay dearly for its stamp, and pay soon. Nature seems, in protection to their loveliness, to have ordered that they who are our superiors in quickness and sensibility should be little disposed to la-

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<sup>8</sup> Greek lyric poets.

borious thought, or to long excursions in the labyrinths of fancy. We may be convinced that the verdict of the judges was biased by nothing else than the habitudes ° of thinking; we may be convinced, too, that living in an age when poetry was cultivated highly, and selected from the most acute and the most dispassionate, they were subject to no greater errors of opinion than are the learned messmates of our English colleges.

*Porson.* You are more liberal in your largesses ° to the fair Greeks than a friend of mine was, who resided in Athens to acquire the language. He assured me that beauty there was in bud at thirteen, in full blossom at fifteen, losing a leaf or two every day at seventeen, trembling on the thorn at nineteen, and under the tree at twenty.

*Southey.* Mr. Porson, it does not appear to me that anything more is necessary, in the first instance, than to interrogate our hearts in what manner they have been affected. If the ear is satisfied; if at one moment a tumult is aroused in the breast, and tranquillized at another, with a perfect consciousness of equal power exerted in both cases; if we rise up from the perusal of the work with a strong excitement to thought, to imagination, to sensibility; above all, if we sat down with some propensities toward evil, and walk away with much stronger toward good, in the midst of a world which we never had entered and of which we never had dreamed before — shall we perversely put on again the *old man* of criticism, and dissemble that we have been conducted by a most beneficent and most potent genius? Nothing proves to me so mani-

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° judgment as to the fading of their charms.

festly in what a pestiferous condition are its lazaretto<sup>s</sup>, as when I observe how little hath been objected against those who have substituted words for things, and how much against those who have reinstated things for words.

Let Wordsworth prove to the world that there may be animation without blood and broken bones, and tenderness remote from the stews. Some will doubt it; for even things the most evident are often but little perceived and strangely estimated. Swift ridiculed the music of Handel and the generalship of Marlborough; Pope the perspicacity and the scholarship of Bentley; Gray the abilities of Shaftesbury and the eloquence of Rousseau. Shakespeare hardly found those who would collect his tragedies; Milton was read from godliness; Virgil was antiquated and rustic; Cicero, Asiatic. What a rabble has persecuted my friend! An elephant is born to be consumed by ants in the midst of his unapproachable solitudes: Wordsworth is the prey of Jeffrey. Why re-pine? Let us rather amuse ourselves with allegories, and recollect that God in the creation left his noblest creature at the mercy of a serpent.

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*Porson.* Wordsworth goes out of his way to be attacked; he picks up a piece of dirt, throws it on the carpet in the midst of the company, and cries, *This is a better man than any of you!* He does indeed mold the base material into what form he chooses; but why not rather invite us to contemplate it than challenge us to condemn it? Here surely is false taste.

*Southey.* The principal and the most general accusation against him is, that the vehicle of his thoughts is unequal to them. Now did ever the judges at the Olympic games say, "We would have awarded to you the meed

of victory, if your chariot had been equal to your horses: it is true they have won; but the people are displeased at a car neither new nor richly gilt, and without a gryphon<sup>o</sup> or sphinx<sup>o</sup> engraved on the axle?" You admire simplicity in Euripides; you censure it in Wordsworth: believe me, sir, it arises in neither from penury of thought — which seldom has produced it — but from the strength of temperance, and at the suggestion of principle.

Take up a poem of Wordsworth's and read it — I would rather say, read them all; and, knowing that a mind like yours must grasp closely what comes within it, I will then appeal to you whether any poet of our country, since Milton, hath exerted greater powers with less of strain and less of ostentation. I would, however, by his permission, lay before you for this purpose a poem which is yet unpublished and incomplete.

*Porson.* Pity, with such abilities, he does not imitate the ancients somewhat more.

*Southey.* Whom did they imitate? If his genius is equal to theirs he has no need of a guide. He also will be an ancient; and the very counterparts of those who now decry him will extol him a thousand years hence in malignity to the moderns.

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# John of Gaunt<sup>1</sup> and Joanna of Kent<sup>2</sup>

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*Joanna.* How is this, my cousin, that you are besieged<sup>3</sup> in your own house, by the citizens of London? I thought you were their idol.

*Gaunt.* If their idol, madam, I am one which they may tread on as they list when down; but which, by my soul and knighthood! the ten best battle-axes among them shall find it hard work to unshrine.<sup>o</sup>

Pardon me: I have no right perhaps to take or touch this hand; yet, my sister, bricks and stones and arrows are not presents fit for you. Let me conduct you some paces hence.

*Joanna.* I will speak to those below in the street. Quit my hand: they shall obey me.

*Gaunt.* If you intend to order my death, madam, your guards who have entered my court, and whose spurs and halberts I hear upon the staircase, may overpower my domestics; and, seeing no such escape as becomes my dignity, I submit to you. Behold my sword and gauntlet at your feet! Some formalities, I trust, will be used in the proceedings against me. Entitle me, in my attainder,

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<sup>1</sup> "Time-honored Lancaster," uncle of Richard II., and father of Henry IV., but with a higher title, the protector of Chaucer.

<sup>2</sup> Wife of the Black Prince and mother of Richard II.

<sup>3</sup> "In the face of the popular hatred toward John of Gaunt, Langland (in *The Complaint of Piers the Ploughman*), paints the Duke in a famous apologue as the cat who, greedy as she might be, at any rate keeps the noble rats from utterly devouring the mice of the people."—*Green's A Shorter History of England*.



not John of Gaunt, not Duke of Lancaster, not King of Castile; nor commemorate my father, the most glorious of princes, the vanquisher and pardoner of the most powerful; nor style me, what those who loved or who flattered me did when I was happier, cousin to the Fair Maid of Kent. Joanna, those days are over! But no enemy, no law, no eternity can take away from me or move further off, my affinity in blood to the conqueror<sup>4</sup> in the field of Crecy, of Poitiers, and Najora. Edward was my brother when he was but your cousin; and the edge of my shield has clinked on his in many a battle. Yes, we were ever near — if not in worth, in danger. She weeps.

*Joanna.* Attainder! God avert it! Duke of Lancaster, what dark thought — alas! that the Regency<sup>5</sup> should have known it! I came hither, sir, for no such purpose as to ensnare or incriminate or alarm you.

These weeds might surely have protected me from the fresh tears you have drawn forth.

*Gaunt.* Sister, be comforted! this visor, too, has felt them.

*Joanna.* O my Edward! my own so lately! Thy memory — thy beloved image — which never hath abandoned me, makes me bold: I dare not say “generous;” for in saying it I should cease to be so — and who could be called generous by the side of thee? I will rescue from perdition the enemy of my son.

Cousin, you loved your brother. Love, then, what was dearer to him than his life: protect what he, valiant as you have seen him, cannot! The father, who foiled so

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<sup>4</sup> Edward, the Black Prince.

<sup>5</sup> Duke of Gloucester, probably.

many, hath left no enemies; the innocent child, who can injure no one, finds them!

Why have you unlaced and laid aside your visor? Do not expose your body to those missiles. Hold your shield before yourself, and step aside. I need it not. I am resolved —

*Gaunt.* On what, my cousin? Speak, and, by the saints! it shall be done. This breast is your shield; this arm is mine.

*Joanna.* Heavens! who could have hurled those masses of stone from below? they stunned me. Did they descend all of them together; or did they split into fragments on hitting the pavement?

*Gaunt.* Truly, I was not looking that way: they came, I must believe, while you were speaking.

*Joanna.* Aside, aside! further back! disregard *me*! Look! that last arrow sticks half its head deep in the wainscoat. •It shook so violently I did not see the feather at first.

No, no, Lancaster! I will not permit it. Take your shield up again; and keep it all before you. Now step aside: I am resolved to prove whether the people will hear me.

*Gaunt.* Then, madam, by your leave —

*Joanna.* Hold!

*Gaunt.* Villains! take back to your kitchens those spits and skewers that you, forsooth, would fain call swords and arrows; and keep your bricks and stones for your graves!

*Joanna.* Imprudent man! who can save you? I shall be frightened: I must speak at once.

O good kind people! ye who so greatly loved me, when

I am sure I had done nothing to deserve it, have I (unhappy me!) no merit with you now, when I would assuage your anger, protect your fame, and send you home contented with yourselves and me? Who is he, worthy citizens, whom ye would drag to slaughter?

True, indeed, he did revile some one. Neither I nor you can say whom — some feaster and rioter, it seems, who had little right (he thought) to carry sword or bow, and who, to show it, hath slunk away. And then another raised his anger: he was indignant that, under his roof, a woman should be exposed to stoning. Which of you would not be as choleric in a like affront? In the house of which among you should I not be protected as resolutely?

No, no: I never can believe those angry cries. Let none ever tell me again he is the enemy of my son, of his king, your darling child, Richard. Are your fears more lively than a poor weak female's? than a mother's? yours, whom he hath so often led to victory, and praised to his father, naming each — he, John of Gaunt, the defender of the helpless, the comforter of the desolate, the rallying signal of the desperately brave!

Retire, Duke of Lancaster! This is no time ——

*Gaunt.* Madam, I obey; but not through terror of that puddle at the house-door, which my handful of dust would dry up. Deign to command me!

*Joanna.* In the name of my son, then, retire!

*Gaunt.* Angelic goodness! I must fairly win it.

*Joanna.* I think I know his voice that crieth out, "Who will answer for him?" An honest and loyal man's, one who would counsel and save me in my difficulty and danger. With what pleasure and satisfaction,

with what perfect joy and confidence, do I answer our right-trusty and well-judging friend!

“Let Lancaster bring his sureties,” say you, “and we separate.” A moment yet before we separate; if I might delay you so long, to receive your sanction of those securities: for, in such grave matters, it would ill become us to be over-hasty. I could bring fifty, I could bring a hundred, not from among soldiers, not from among courtiers; but selected from yourselves, were it equitable and fair to show such partialities, or decorous in the parent and guardian of a king to offer any other than herself.

Raised by the hand of the Almighty from amidst you, but still one of you, if the mother of a family is a part of it, here I stand surety for John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, for his loyalty and allegiance.

*Gaunt* (*running back toward Joanna*). Are the rioters, then, bursting into the chamber through the windows?

*Joanna*. The windows and doors of this solid edifice rattled and shook at the people’s acclamation. My word is given for you: this was theirs in return. Lancaster! what a voice have the people when they speak out! It shakes me with astonishment, almost with consternation, while it establishes the throne: what must it be when it is lifted up in vengeance!

*Gaunt*. Wind; vapor —

*Joanna*. Which none can wield nor hold. Need I say this to my cousin of Lancaster?

*Gaunt*. Rather say, madam, that there is always one star above which can tranquillize and control them.

*Joanna*. Go, cousin! another time more sincerity!

*Gaunt*. You have this day saved my life from the

people; for I now see my danger better, when it is no longer close before me. My Christ! if ever I forget —

*Joanna.* Swear not: every man in England hath sworn what you would swear. But if you abandon my Richard, my brave and beautiful child, may — Oh! I could never curse, nor wish an evil; but, if you desert him in the hour of need, you will think of those who have not deserted you, and your own great heart will lie heavy on you, Lancaster!

Am I graver than I ought to be, that you look dejected? Come, then, gentle cousin, lead me to my horse, and accompany me home. Richard will embrace us tenderly. Every one is dear to every other upon rising out fresh from peril; affectionately then will he look, sweet boy, upon his mother and his uncle! Never mind how many questions he may ask you, nor how strange ones. His only displeasure, if he has any, will be that he stood not against the rioters or among them.

*Gaunt.* Older than he have been as fond of mischief, and as fickle in the choice of a party.

I shall tell him that, coming to blows, the assailant is often in the right; that the assailed is always.

## Leofric and Godiva

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*Godiva.* There is a dearth in the land, my sweet Leofric! Remember how many weeks of drought we have had, even in the deep pastures of Leicestershire; and how many Sundays we have heard the same prayers for rain, and supplications that it would please the Lord in his mercy to turn aside his anger from the poor, pining cattle. You, my dear husband, have imprisoned more than one malefactor for leaving his dead ox in the public way; and other hinds have fled before you out of the traces, in which they, and their sons and their daughters, and haply their old fathers and mothers, were dragging the abandoned wain homeward. Although we were accompanied by many brave spearmen and skillful archers, it was perilous to pass the creatures which the farm-yard dogs, driven from the hearth by the poverty of their masters, were tearing and devouring; while others, bitten and lamed, filled the air either with long and deep howls or sharp and quick barkings, as they struggled with hunger and feebleness, or were exasperated by heat and pain. Nor could the thyme from the heath, nor the bruised branches of the fir-tree, extinguish or abate the foul odor.

*Leofric.* And now, Godiva, my darling, thou art afraid we should be eaten up before we enter the gates of Coventry; or perchance that in the gardens there are no roses to greet thee, no sweet herbs for thy mat and pillow.

*Godiva.* Leofric, I have no such fears. This is the month of roses: I find them everywhere since my blessed marriage. They, and all other sweet herbs, I know not why, seem to greet me wherever I look at them, as though



they knew and expected me. Surely they cannot feel that I am fond of them.

*Leofric.* O light, laughing simpleton! But what wouldst thou? I came not hither to pray; and yet if praying would satisfy thee, or remove the drought, I would ride up straightway to Saint Michael's and pray until morning.

*Godiva.* I would do the same, O Leofric! but God hath turned away his ear from holier lips than mine. Would my own dear husband hear me, if I implored him for what is easier to accomplish,—what he can do like God?

*Leofric.* How! what is it?

*Godiva.* I would not, in the first hurry of your wrath, appeal to you, my loving Lord, in behalf of these unhappy men who have offended you.

*Leofric.* Unhappy! is that all?

*Godiva.* Unhappy they must surely be, to have offended you so grievously. What a soft air breathes over us! how quiet and serene and still an evening! how calm are the heavens and the earth! — Shall none enjoy them; not even we, my Leofric? The sun is ready to set: let it never set,<sup>1</sup> O Leofric, on your anger. These are not my words: they are better than mine. Should they lose their virtue from my unworthiness in uttering them?

*Leofric.* Godiva, wouldst thou plead to me for rebels?

*Godiva.* They have, then, drawn the sword against you? Indeed, I knew it not.

*Leofric.* They have omitted to send me my dues, established by my ancestors, well knowing of our nuptials,

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<sup>1</sup> "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

and of the charges and festivities they require, and that in a season of such scarcity my own lands are insufficient.

*Godiva.* If they were starving, as they said they were ——

*Leofric.* Must I starve too? Is it not enough to lose my vassals?

*Godiva.* Enough! O God! too much! too much! May you never lose them! Give them life, peace, comfort, contentment. There are those among them who kissed me in my infancy, and who blessed me at the baptismal font. Leofric, Leofric! the first old man I meet I shall think is one of those; and I shall think on the blessing he gave, and (ah me!) on the blessing I bring back to him. My heart will bleed, will burst; and he will weep at it! he will weep, poor soul, for the wife of a cruel lord who denounces vengeance on him, who carries death into his family!

*Leofric.* We must hold solemn festivals.

*Godiva.* We must, indeed.

*Leofric.* Well, then?

*Godiva.* Is the clamorousness that succeeds the death of God's dumb creatures, are crowded halls, are slaughtered cattle, festivals? — are maddening songs, and giddy dances, and hireling praises from parti-colored coats? Can the voice of a minstrel tell us better things of ourselves than our own internal one might tell us; or can his breath make our breath softer in sleep? O my beloved! let everything be a joyance to us: it will, if we will. Sad is the day, and worse must follow, when we hear the black-bird in the garden, and do not throb with joy. But, Leofric, the high festival is strown by the servant of God upon the heart of man. It is gladness, it is thanksgiving;

it is the orphan, the starveling, pressed to the bosom, and bidden as its first commandment to remember its benefactor. We will hold this festival; the guests are ready: we may keep it up for weeks, and months, and years together, and always be the happier and the richer for it. The beverage of this feast, O Leofric, is sweeter than bee or flower or vine can give us: it flows from heaven; and in heaven will it abundantly be poured out again to him who pours it out here abundantly.

*Leofric.* Thou art wild.

*Godiva.* I have, indeed, lost myself. Some Power, some good kind Power, melts me (body and soul and voice) into tenderness and love. O my husband, we must obey it. Look upon me! look upon me! lift your sweet eyes from the ground! I will not cease to supplicate; I dare not.

*Leofric.* We may think upon it.

*Godiva.* O never say that! What! think upon goodness when you can be good? Let not the infants cry for sustenance! The mother of our blessed Lord will hear them; us never, never afterward.

*Leofric.* Here comes the Bishop: we are but one mile from the walls. Why dismountest thou? no bishop can expect it. Godiva! my honor and rank among men are humbled by this. Earl Godwin will hear of it. Up! up! the Bishop hath seen it: he urgeth his horse onward. Dost thou not hear him now upon the solid turf behind thee?

*Godiva.* Never, no, never will I rise, O Leofric, until you remit this impious task—this tax on hard labor, on hard life.

*Leofric.* Turn round: look how the fat nag canters,

as to the tune of a sinner's psalm, slow and hard-breathing. What reason or right can the people have to complain while their bishop's steed is so sleek and well caparisoned? Inclination to change, desire to abolish old usages.—Up! up! for shame! They shall smart for it, idlers! Sir Bishop, I must blush for my young bride.

*Godiva.* My husband, my husband! will you pardon the city?

*Leofric.* Sir Bishop! I could not think you would have seen her in this plight. Will I pardon? Yea, Godiva, by the holy rood, will I pardon the city, when thou ridest naked at noontide through the streets!

*Godiva.* O my dear, cruel Leofric, where is the heart you gave me? It was not so: can mine have hardened it?

*Bishop.* Earl, thou abasest thy spouse; she turneth pale, and weepeth. Lady Godiva, peace be with thee.

*Godiva.* Thanks, holy man! peace will be with me when peace is with your city. Did you hear my Lord's cruel word?

*Bishop.* I did, lady.

*Godiva.* Will you remember it, and pray against it?

*Bishop.* Wilt *thou* forget it, daughter?

*Godiva.* I am not offended.

*Bishop.* 'Angel of peace and purity!

*Godiva.* But treasure it up in your heart: deem it an incense, good only when it is consumed and spent, ascending with prayer and sacrifice. And, now, what was it?

*Bishop.* Christ save us; that he will pardon the city when thou ridest naked through the streets at noon.

*Godiva.* Did he swear an oath?

*Bishop.* He sware by the holy rood.

*Godiva.* My Redeemer, thou hast heard it! save the city!

*Leofric.* We are now upon the beginning of the pavement: these are the suburbs. Let us think of feasting: we may pray afterward; to-morrow we shall rest.

*Godiva.* No judgments, then, to-morrow, Leofric?

*Leofric.* None: we will carouse.

*Godiva.* The saints of heaven have given me strength and confidence; my prayers are heard; the heart of my beloved is now softened.

*Leofric.* Ay, ay.

*Godiva.* Say, dearest Leofric, is there indeed no other hope, no other mediation?

*Leofric.* I have sworn. Beside, thou hast made me redden and turn my face away from thee, and all the knaves have seen it; this adds to the city's crime.

*Godiva.* I have blushed too, Leofric, and was not rash nor obdurate.

*Leofric.* But thou, my sweetest, art given to blushing: there is no conquering it in thee. I wish thou hadst not alighted so hastily and roughly: it hath shaken down a sheaf of thy hair. Take heed thou sit not upon it, lest it anguish thee. Well done! it mingleth now sweetly with the cloth of gold upon the saddle, running here and there, as if it had life and faculties and business, and were working thereupon some newer and cunninger device. O my beauteous Eve! there is a Paradise about thee! the world is refreshed as thou movest and breathest on it. I cannot see or think of evil where thou art. I could throw my arms even here about thee. No signs for me! no shaking of sunbeams! no reproof or frown of wonderment.—I *will* say it — now, then, for worse — I could close with my kisses thy half-open lips, ay, and those lovely and loving eyes, before the people.

*Godiva.* To-morrow you shall kiss me, and they shall bless you for it. I shall be very pale, for to-night I must fast and pray.

*Leofric.* I do not hear thee; the voices of the folks are so loud under this archway.

*Godiva (to herself).* God help them! good kind souls! I hope they will not crowd about me so to-morrow. O Leofric! could my name be forgotten, and yours alone remembered! But perhaps my innocence may save me from reproach; and how many as innocent are in fear and famine! No eye will open on me but fresh from tears. What a young mother for so large a family! Shall my youth harm me? Under God's hand it gives me courage. Ah! when will the morning come? Ah! when will the noon be over?



## Diogenes<sup>1</sup> and Plato<sup>2</sup>

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*Diogenes.* Stop! stop! come hither! Why lookest thou so scornfully and askance upon me?

*Plato.* Let me go! loose me! I am resolved to pass.

*Diogenes.* Nay, then, by Jupiter and this tub! thou leavest three good ells of Milesian cloth behind thee. Whither wouldst thou amble?

*Plato.* I am not obliged in courtesy to tell you.

*Diogenes.* Upon whose errand? Answer me directly.

*Plato.* Upon my own.

*Diogenes.* Oh, then I will hold thee yet awhile. If it were upon another's, it might be a hardship to a good citizen, though not to a good philosopher.

*Plato.* That can be no impediment to my release: you do not think me one.

*Diogenes.* No, by my Father Jove!

*Plato.* Your father!

*Diogenes.* Why not? Thou shouldst be the last man to doubt it. Hast not thou declared it irrational to refuse our belief to those who assert that they are begotten by the gods, though the assertion (these are thy words) be

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<sup>1</sup> The Greek who lived, sometimes, in a tub; refused to be initiated into the mysteries of Ceres, hence was "worse than an infidel;" visited by Alexander the Great, in reply to whether he wanted anything, replied, "Yes, that you would stand out of my sunshine."

<sup>2</sup> One of the most eminent of Greek philosophers and writers, much read in this age in the original and more in translation. Cicero said that he could never read Plato's description of the death of Socrates without tears—"illacrymari soleo Platonem legens." Plato believed in the immortality of the soul. "Yes, it must be so. Plato, thou reasonest well."—*Addison's Cato*.

unfounded on reason or probability? In me there is a chance of it: whereas in the generation of such people as thou art fondest of frequenting, who claim it loudly, there are always too many competitors to leave it probable.

*Plato.* Those who speak against the great do not usually speak from morality, but from envy.

*Diogenes.* Thou hast a glimpse of the truth in this place, but as thou hast already shown thy ignorance in attempting to prove to me what a *man* is, ill can I expect to learn from thee what is a *great man*.

*Plato.* No doubt your experience and intercourse will afford me the information.

*Diogenes.* Attend, and take it. The great man is he who hath nothing to fear and nothing to hope from another. It is he who, while he demonstrates the iniquity of the laws, and is able to correct them, obeys them peaceably. It is he who looks on the ambitious both as weak and fraudulent. It is he who hath no disposition or occasion for any kind of deceit, no reason for being or for appearing different from what he is. It is he who can call together the most select company when it pleases him.

*Plato.* Excuse my interruption. In the beginning of your definition I fancied that you were designating your own person, as most people do in describing what is admirable; now I find that you have some other in contemplation.

*Diogenes.* I thank thee for allowing me what perhaps I *do* possess, but what I was not then thinking of; as is often the case with rich possessors: in fact, the latter part of the description suits me as well as any portion of the former.

*Plato.* You may call together the best company, by

using your hands in the call, as you did with me; otherwise I am not sure that you would succeed in it.

*Diogenes.* My thoughts are my company; I can bring them together, select them, detain them, dismiss them. Imbecile and vicious men cannot do any of these things. Their thoughts are scattered, vague, uncertain, cumbersome: and the worst stick to them the longest; many indeed by choice, the greater part by necessity, and accompanied, some by weak wishes, others by vain remorse.

*Plato.* Is there nothing of greatness, O Diogenes! in exhibiting how cities and communities may be governed best, how morals may be kept the purest, and power become the most stable?

*Diogenes.* *Something* of greatness does not constitute the great man. Let me however see him who hath done what thou sayest: he must be the most universal and the most indefatigable traveler, he must also be the oldest creature, upon earth.

*Plato.* How so?

*Diogenes.* Because he must know perfectly the climate, the soil, the situation, the peculiarities, of the races, of their allies, of their enemies; he must have sounded their harbors, he must have measured the quantity of their arable land and pasture, of their woods and mountains; he must have ascertained whether there are fisheries on their coast, and even what winds are prevalent. On these causes, with some others, depend the bodily strength, the numbers, the wealth, the wants, the capacities of the people.

*Plato.* Such are low thoughts.

*Diogenes.* The bird of wisdom flies low, and seeks her food under hedges: the eagle himself would be starved if

he always soared aloft and against the sun. The sweetest fruit grows near the ground, and the plants that bear it require ventilation and lopping. Were this not to be done in thy garden, every walk and alley, every plot and border, would be covered with runners and roots, with boughs and suckers. We want no poets or logicians or metaphysicians to govern us: we want practical men, honest men, continent men, unambitious men, fearful to solicit a trust, slow to accept, and resolute never to betray one. Experimentalists may be the best philosophers: they are always the worst politicians. Teach people their duties, and they will know their interests. Change as little as possible, and correct as much.

Philosophers are absurd from many causes, but principally from laying out unthriftilly their distinctions. They set up four virtues: fortitude, prudence, temperance, and justice. Now a man may be a very bad one, and yet possess three out of the four. Every cut-throat must, if he has been a cut-throat on many occasions, have more fortitude and more prudence than the greater part of those whom we consider as the best men. And what cruel wretches, both executioners and judges, have been strictly just! how little have they cared what gentleness, what generosity, what genius, their sentence hath removed from the earth! Temperance and beneficence contain all other virtues. Take them home, Plato; split them, expound them; do what thou wilt with them, if thou but use them.

Before I gave thee this lesson, which is a better than thou ever gavest any one, and easier to remember, thou wert accusing me of invidiousness and malice against those whom thou callest the great, meaning to say the powerful. Thy imagination, I am well aware, had taken

its flight toward Sicily, where thou seekest thy great man, as earnestly and undoubtingly as Ceres sought her Persephone,<sup>3</sup> Faith! honest Plato, I have no reason to envy thy worthy friend Dionysius.<sup>4</sup> Look at my nose. A lad seven or eight years old threw an apple at me yesterday, while I was gazing at the clouds, and gave me nose enough for two moderate men. Instead of such a godsend, what should I have thought of my fortune if, after living all my lifetime among golden vases, rougher than my hand with their emeralds and rubies, their engravings and embossments; among Parian caryatides<sup>o</sup> and porphyry sphinxes<sup>o</sup>; among philosophers with rings upon their fingers and linen next their skin; and among singing-boys and dancing-girls, to whom alone thou speakest intelligibly — I ask thee again, what should I in reason have thought of my fortune, if, after these facilities and superfluities, I had at last been pelted out of my house, not by one young rogue, but by thousands of all ages, and not with an apple (I wish I could say a rotten one), but with pebbles and broken pots; and, to crown my deserts, had been compelled to become the teacher of so promising a generation? Great men, forsooth! thou knowest at last who they are.

*Plato.* There are great men of various kinds.

*Diogenes.* No, by my beard, are there not!

*Plato.* What! are there not great captains, great geometricians, great dialectitians<sup>o</sup>?

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<sup>3</sup> Persephone, or Proserpine, gathering flowers in Sicily, was carried off by Pluto to his gloomy kingdom below, whither her mother Ceres undauntedly followed.

<sup>4</sup> Dionysius the Younger, Tyrant of Syracuse, invited Plato to his court, where he sojourned for a time. The story in old *Rollin* is surpassingly interesting.

*Diogenes.* Who denied it? A great man was the postulate. Try thy hand now at the powerful one.

*Plato.* On seeing the exercise of power, a child cannot doubt who is powerful, more or less; for power is relative. All men are weak, not only if compared to the Demiurgos,<sup>o</sup> but if compared to the sea or the earth, or certain things upon each of them, such as elephants and whales. So placid and tranquil is the scene around us, we can hardly bring to mind the images of strength and force, the precipices, the abysses —

*Diogenes.* Prythee hold thy loose tongue, twinkling and glittering like a serpent's in the midst of luxuriance and rankness! Did never this reflection of thine warn thee that, in human life, the precipices and abysses would be much farther from our admiration if we were less inconsiderate, selfish, and vile? I will not however stop thee long, for thou wert going on quite consistently. As thy great men are fighters and wranglers, so thy mighty things upon the earth and sea are troublesome and intractable<sup>o</sup> encumbrances. Thou preceivedst not what was greater in the former case, neither art thou aware what is greater in this. Didst thou feel the gentle air that passed us?

*Plato.* I did not, just then.

*Diogenes.* That air, so gentle, so imperceptible to thee, is more powerful not only than all the creatures that breathe and live by it; not only than all the oaks of the forest, which it rears in an age and shatters in a moment; not only than all the monsters of the sea, but than the sea itself, which it tosses up into foam, and breaks against every rock in its vast circumference; for it carries in its bosom, with perfect calm and composure, the uncontrollable ocean and the peopled earth, like an atom of a feather.



To the world's turmoils and pageantries is attacted, not only the admiration of the populace, but the zeal of the orator, the enthusiasm of the poet, the investigation of the historian, and the contemplation of the philosopher: yet how silent and invisible are they in the depths of air! Do I say in those depths and deserts? No; I say in the distance of a swallow's flight,—at the distance she rises above us, ere a sentence brief as this could be uttered.

What are its mines and mountains? Fragments welded° up and dislocated by the expansion of water from below; the most part reduced to mud, the rest to splinters. Afterward sprang up fire in many places, and again tore and mangled the mutilated carcass, and still growls over it.

What are its cities and ramparts, and moles and monuments? Segments of a fragment, which one man puts together and another throws down. Here we stumble upon thy great ones at their work. Show me now, if thou canst, in history, three great warriors, or three great statesmen, who have acted otherwise than spiteful children.

*Plato.* I will begin to look for them in history when I have discovered the same number in the philosophers or the poets. A prudent man searches in his own garden after the plant he wants, before he casts his eyes over the stalls in Kenkrea or Keramicos.

Returning to your observation on the potency of the air, I am not ignorant or unmindful of it. May I venture to express my opinion to you, Diogenes, that the earlier discoverers and distributors of wisdom (which wisdom lies among us in ruins and remnants, partly distorted and partly concealed by theological allegory) meant by Jupiter the air in its agitated state; by Juno the air in

its quiescent. These are the great agents, and therefore called the king and queen of the gods. Jupiter is denominated by Homer the *compeller of clouds*: Juno receives them, and remits them in showers to plants and animals.

I may trust you, I hope, O Diogenes? <sup>5</sup>

*Diogenes.* Thou mayest lower the gods in my presence, as safely as men in the presence of Timon.<sup>6</sup>

*Plato.* I would not lower them: I would exalt them.

*Diogenes.* More foolish and presumptuous still!

*Plato.* Fair words, O Sinopean! <sup>7</sup> I protest to you my aim is truth.

*Diogenes.* I cannot lead thee where of a certainty thou mayest always find it; but I will tell thee what it is. Truth is a point; the subtlest and finest; harder than adamant; never to be broken, worn away, or blunted. Its only bad quality is, that it is sure to hurt those who touch it; and likely to draw blood, perhaps the life-blood, of those who press earnestly upon it. Let us away from this narrow lane skirted with hemlock, and pursue our road again through the wind and dust, toward the *great* man and the *powerful*. Him I would call the powerful one who controls the storms of his mind, and turns to good account the worst accidents of his fortune. The great man, I was going on to demonstrate, is somewhat more. He must be able to do this, and he must have an intellect <sup>8</sup> which puts into motion the intellect of others.

*Plato.* Socrates, then, was your great man.

*Diogenes.* He was indeed; nor can all thou hast attributed to him ever make me think the contrary. I wish

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<sup>5</sup> You will not make known my lack of orthodoxy?

<sup>6</sup> Read *Shakespeare's Timon of Athens*.

<sup>7</sup> Native of Sinope, a city of Pontus.

<sup>8</sup> A teacher well defined.

he could have kept a little more at home, and have thought it as worth his while to converse with his own children as with others.

*Plato.* He knew himself born for the benefit of the human race.

*Diogenes.* Those who are born for the benefit of the human race go but little into it: those who are born for its curse are crowded.

*Plato.* It was requisite to dispel the mists of ignorance and error.

*Diogenes.* Has he done it? What doubt has he elucidated, or what fact has he established? Although I was but twelve years old and resident in another city when he died, I have taken some pains in my inquiries about him from persons of less vanity and less perverseness than his disciples. He did not leave behind him any true philosopher among them; any who followed his mode of argumentation, his subjects of disquisition, or his course of life; any who would subdue the malignant passions or coerce the looser; any who would abstain from calumny or from cavil; any who would devote his days to the glory of his country, or, what is easier and perhaps wiser, to his own well-founded contentment and well-merited repose. Xenophon,<sup>9</sup> the best of them, offered up sacrifices, believed in oracles, consulted soothsayers, turned pale at a jay, and was dysenteric at a magpie.

*Plato.* He had courage at least.

*Diogenes.* His courage was of so strange a quality, that he was ready, if jay or magpie did not cross him, to fight for Spartan or Persian. Plato, whom thou esteemest much more, and knowest somewhat less, careth as little

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<sup>9</sup> He who commanded, and wrote, *The Anabasis*,

for portent and omen as doth Diogenes. What he would have done for a Persian I cannot say; certain I am that he would have no more fought for a Spartan than he would for his own father: yet he mortally hates the man who hath a kinder muse or a better milliner, or a seat nearer the minion of a king. So much for the two disciples of Socrates who have acquired the greatest celebrity!

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*Plato.* Diogenes! if you must argue or discourse with me, I will endure your asperity for the sake of your acuteness; but it appears to me a more philosophical thing to avoid what is insulting and vexatious, than to breast and brave it.

*Diogenes.* Thou hast spoken well.

*Plato.* It belongs to the vulgar, not to us, to fly from a man's opinions to his actions, and to stab him in his own house for having received no wound in the school. One merit you will allow me: I always keep my temper; which you seldom do.

*Diogenes.* Is mine a good or a bad one?

*Plato.* Now, must I speak sincerely?

*Diogenes.* Dost thou, a philosopher, ask such a question of me, a philosopher. Ay, sincerely or not at all.

*Plato.* Sincerely as you could wish, I must declare, then, your temper is the worst in the world.

*Diogenes.* I am much in the right, therefore, not to keep it. Embrace me: I have spoken now in thy own manner. Because thou sayest the most malicious things the most placidly, thou thinkest or pretendest thou art sincere.

*Plato.* Certainly those who are most the masters

of their resentments are likely to speak less erroneously than the passionate and morose.

*Diogenes.* If they would, they might; but the moderate are not usually the most sincere, for the same circumspection which makes them moderate makes them likewise retentive of what could give offense: they are also timid in regard to fortune and favor, and hazard little. There is no mass of sincerity in any place. What there is must be picked up patiently, a grain or two at a time; and the season for it is after a storm, after the overflowing of banks, and bursting of mounds, and sweeping away of landmarks. Men will always hold something back; they must be shaken and loosened a little, to make them let go what is deepest in them, and weightiest and purest.

*Plato.* Shaking and loosening as much about you as was requisite for the occasion, it became you to demonstrate where and in what manner I had made Socrates appear less sagacious and less eloquent than he was; it became you likewise to consider the great difficulty of finding new thoughts and new expressions for those who had more of them than any other men, and to represent them in all the brilliancy of their wit and in all the majesty of their genius. I do not assert that I have done it; but if I have not, what man has? what man has come so nigh to it? He who could bring Socrates, or Solon,<sup>10</sup> or Diogenes through a dialogue, without disparagement, is much nearer in his intellectual powers to them, than any other is near to him.

*Diogenes.* Let Diogenes alone, and Socrates, and Solon. None of the three ever occupied his hours in tinge-

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<sup>10</sup> The great lawgiver.

ing and curling the tarnished plumes of prostitute Philosophy, or deemed anything worth his attention, care, or notice, that did not make men brave and independent. As thou callest on me to show thee where and in what manner thou hast misrepresented thy teacher, and as thou seemest to set an equal value on eloquence and on reasoning, I shall attend to thee awhile on each of these matters, first inquiring of thee whether the axiom is Socratic, that it is never becoming to get drunk, *unless* in the solemnities of Bacchus.<sup>11</sup>

*Plato.* This god was the discoverer of the vine and of its uses.

*Diogenes.* Is drunkenness one of its uses, or the discovery of a god? If Pallas<sup>12</sup> or Jupiter hath given us reason, we should sacrifice our reason with more propriety to Jupiter or Pallas. To Bacchus is due a libation of wine; the same being his gift, as thou preachest.

Another and a graver question.

Did Socrates teach thee that "slaves are to be scourged, and by no means admonished as though they were the children of the master"?

*Plato.* He did not argue upon government.

*Diogenes.* He argued upon humanity, whereon all government is founded: whatever is beside it is usurpation.

*Plato.* Are slaves then never to be scourged, whatever be their transgressions and enormities?

*Diogenes.* Whatever they be, they are less than his who reduced them to their condition.

*Plato.* What! though they murder his whole family?

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<sup>11</sup> God of wine.

<sup>12</sup> Minerva, goddess of wisdom.



*Diogenes.* Ay, and poison the public fountain of the city.

What am I saying? and to whom? Horrible as is this crime, and next in atrocity to parricide, thou deemest it a lighter one than stealing a fig or grape. The stealer of these is scourged by thee; the sentence on the poisoner is to cleanse out the receptacle. There is, however, a kind of poisoning which, to do thee justice, comes before thee with all its horrors, and which thou wouldst punish capitally, even in such personage as an aruspex<sup>o</sup> or diviner: I mean the poisoning by incantation. I, and my whole family, my whole race, my whole city, may bite the dust in agony from a truss of henbane in the well; and little harm done forsooth! Let an idle fool set an image of me in wax before the fire, and whistle and caper to it, and purr and pray, and chant a hymn to Hecate<sup>13</sup> while it melts, entreating and imploring her that I may melt as easily,—and thou wouldst, in thy equity and holiness, strangle him at the first stave of his psalmody.

*Plato.* If this is an absurdity, can you find another?

*Diogenes.* Truly, in reading thy book, I doubted at first, and for a long continuance, whether thou couldst have been serious; and whether it were not rather a satire on those busy-bodies who are incessantly intermeddling

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<sup>13</sup> *First Witch.* Why, how now, Hecate! You look angrily.

*Hec.* Have I not reason, beldams as you are,  
Saucy and overbold? How did you dare  
To trade and traffic with Macbeth  
In riddles and affairs of death?  
And I, the mistress of your charms,  
The close contriver of all harms,  
Was never called to bear my part,  
Or show the glory of our art?

— *Macbeth*, Act III, Scene V.

in other people's affairs. It was only on the protestation of thy intimate friends that I believed thee to have written it in earnest. As for thy question, it is idle to stoop and pick out absurdities from a mass of inconsistency and injustice; but another and another I could throw in, and another and another afterward, from any page in the volume. Two bare, staring falsehoods lift their beaks one upon the other, like spring frogs. Thou sayest that no punishment decreed by the laws tendeth to evil. What! if not immoderate? not if partial? Why then repeal any penal statute while the subject of its animadversion exists? In prisons the less criminal are placed among the more criminal, the inexperienced in vice together with the hardened in it. This is part of the punishment, though it precedes the sentence; nay, it is often inflicted on those whom the judges acquit: the law, by allowing it, does it.

The next is, that he who is punished by the laws is the better for it, however the less depraved. What! if anteriorly to the sentence he lives and converses with worse men, some of whom console him by deadening the sense of shame, others by removing the apprehension of punishment? Many laws as certainly make men bad, as bad men make many laws; yet under thy regimen they take us from the bosom of the nurse, turn the meat about upon the platter, pull the bed-clothes off, make us sleep when we would wake, and wake when we would sleep, and never cease to rummage and twitch us, until they see us safe landed at the grave.

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Seriously, you who wear embroidered slippers ought to be very cautious of treading in the mire. Philosophers

should not only live the simplest lives, but should also use the plainest language. Poets, in employing magnificent and sonorous words, teach philosophy the better by thus disarming suspicion that the finest poetry contains and conveys the finest philosophy. You will never let any man hold his right station: you would rank Solon with Homer for poetry. This is absurd. The only resemblance is in both being eminently wise. Pindar, too, makes even the cadences of his dithyrambics<sup>o</sup> keep time to the flute of Reason. My tub, which holds fifty-fold thy wisdom, would crack at the reverberation of thy voice.

*Plato.* Farewell.

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*Diogenes.* I mean that every one of thy whimsies hath been picked up somewhere by thee in thy travels; and each of them hath been rendered more weak and puny by its place of concealment in thy closet. What thou hast written on the immortality of the soul goes rather to prove the immortality of the body; and applies as well to the body of a weasel or an eel as to the fairer one of Agathon<sup>14</sup> or of Aster.<sup>14</sup> Why not at once introduce a new religion, since religions keep and are relished in proportion as they are salted with absurdity, inside and out? and all of them must have one great crystal of it for the center; but Philosophy pines and dies unless she drinks limpid water. When Pherecydes and Pythagoras felt in themselves the majesty of contemplation, they spurned the idea that flesh and bones and arteries should confer it; and that what comprehends the past and the future should sink in a moment and be annihilated forever. "No," cried they, "the power of thinking is no

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<sup>14</sup> Greek beauties.

more in the brain than in the hair, although the brain may be the instrument on which it plays. It is not corporeal, it is not of this world; its existence is eternity, its residence is infinity." I forbear to discuss the rationality of their belief, and pass on straightway to thine; if, indeed, I am to consider as one, belief and doctrine.

*Plato.* As you will.

*Diogenes.* I should rather, then, regard these things as mere ornaments; just as many decorate their apartments with lyres and harps, which they themselves look at from the couch, supinely complacent, and leave for visitors to admire and play on.

*Plato.* I foresee not how you can disprove my argument on the immortality of the soul,<sup>15</sup> which, being contained in the best of my dialogues, and being often asked for among my friends, I carry with me.

*Diogenes.* At this time?

*Plato.* Even so.

*Diogenes.* Give me then a certain part of it for my perusal.

*Plato.* Willingly.

*Diogenes.* Hermes<sup>16</sup> and Pallas! I wanted but a cubit of it, or at most a fathom, and thou art pulling it out by the plethron.<sup>o</sup>

*Plato.* This is the place in question.

*Diogenes.* Read it.

*Plato* (reads). "Sayest thou not that death is the opposite of life, and that they spring the one from the other?" "Yes." "What springs then from the living?"

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<sup>15</sup> "Else why this pleasing hope, this fond desire,  
This longing after immortality?"—*Addison's Cato.*

<sup>16</sup> Mercury,

"The dead." "And what from the dead?" "*The living.*" "Then all things alive spring from the dead."

*Diogenes.* Why thy repetition? but go on.

*Plato* (reads). "Souls therefore exist after death in the infernal regions."

*Diogenes.* Where is the *therefore*? where is it even as to *existence*? As to the infernal regions, there is nothing that points toward a proof, or promises an indication. Death neither springs from life, nor life from death. Although death is the inevitable consequence of life, if the observation and experience of ages go for anything, yet nothing shows us, or ever hath signified, that life comes from death. Thou mightest as well say that a barley-corn dies before the germ of another barley-corn grows up from it, than which nothing is more untrue; for it is only the protecting part of the germ that perishes, when its protection is no longer necessary. The consequence, that souls exist after death, cannot be drawn from the corruption of the body, even if it were demonstrable that out of this corruption a live one could rise up. Thou hast not said that the soul is among those dead things which living things must spring from; thou hast not said that a living soul produces a dead soul, or that a dead soul produces a living one.

*Diogenes.* Whatever we cannot account for is in the same predicament. We may be gainers by being ignorant if we can be thought mysterious. It is better to shake our heads and to let nothing out of them, than to be plain and explicit in matters of difficulty. I do not mean in confessing our ignorance or our imperfect knowledge of them, but in clearing them up perspicuously: for, if we answer with ease, we may haply be thought good-

natured, quick, communicative; never deep, never sagacious; not very defective possibly in our intellectual faculties, yet unequal and chinky, and liable to the probation<sup>17</sup> of every clown's knuckle.

*Plato.* The brightest of stars appear the most unsteady and tremulous in their light; not from any quality inherent in themselves, but from the vapors that float below, and from the imperfection of vision in the surveyor.

*Diogenes.* Draw thy robe around thee; let the folds fall gracefully, and look majestic. That sentence is an admirable one; but not for me. I want sense, not stars. What then? Do no vapors float below the others? and is there no imperfection in the vision of those who look at *them*, if they are the same men, and look the next moment? We must move on: I shall follow the dead bodies, and the benighted driver of their fantastic bier, close and keen as any hyena.

*Plato.* Certainly, O Diogenes, you excel me in elucidations and similes: mine was less obvious.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> testing.

<sup>18</sup> As reporter of the speeches in Parliament on great occasions, Dr. Johnson is said to have declared that he saw to it, "The Whig dogs never got the best of the argument." So, it seems, Landor took the same unkindly care of Plato.



## General Lacy and Cura Merino

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*Merino.* It was God's will. As for those rebels, the finger of God —

*Lacy.* Prythee, Señor Curedo, let God's finger alone. Very worthy men are apt to snatch at it upon too light occasions: they would stop their tobacco-pipes with it. If Spain, in the opinion of our late opponents, could have obtained a free Constitution by other means, they never would have joined the French. True, they persisted: but how few have wisdom or courage enough to make the distinction between retracting an error and deserting a cause! He who declares himself a party-man, let his party profess the most liberal sentiments, is a registered and enlisted slave; he begins by being a zealot and ends by being a dupe; he is tormented by regret and anger, yet is he as incapable from shame and irresolution of throwing off the livery under which he sweats and fumes, as was that stronger one,<sup>1</sup> more generously mad, the garment<sup>1</sup> empoisoned with the life-blood of the Centaur.

*Merino.* How much better is it to abolish parties by fixing a legitimate king at the head of affairs!

*Lacy.* The object, thank God, is accomplished. Ferdinand<sup>2</sup> is returning to Madrid, if perverse men do not mislead him.

*Merino.* And yet there are Spaniards wild enough to talk of Cortes and Chambers of Peers.

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<sup>1</sup> Hercules, and the robe steeped in the blood of Nessus.

<sup>2</sup> King of Spain returning (1824) to his throne by the aid of a French army.

*Lacy.* Of the latter I know nothing; but I know that Spain formerly was great, free, and happy, by the administration of her Cortes: and, as I prefer in policy old experiments to new, I should not be sorry if the madness, as you call it, spread in that direction.

There are many forms of government, but only two kinds; the free and the despotic: in the one the people hath its representatives, in the other not. Freedom, to be, must be perfect: the half-free can no more exist, even in idea, than the half-entire. Restraints laid by a people on itself are sacrifices made to liberty; and it never exerts a more beneficent or a greater power than in imposing them. The nation that pays taxes without its own consent is under slavery:<sup>3</sup> whosoever causes, whosoever maintains that slavery, subverts or abets the subversion of social order. Whoever is above the law is out of the law, just as evidently as whoever is above this room is out of this room. If men will outlaw themselves by overt acts, we are not to condemn those who remove them by the means least hazardous to the public peace. If even my daughter brought forth a monster, I could not arrest the arm that should smother it: and monsters of this kind are by infinite degree less pernicious than such as rise up in society by violation of law.

In regard to a Chamber of Peers, Spain does not contain the materials. What has been the education of our grandees? How narrow the space between the horn-book<sup>4</sup> and *sanbenito*!<sup>5</sup> The English are amazed, and the French are indignant, that we have not imitated their

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<sup>3</sup> John Fiske, in his *Civil Government*.

<sup>4</sup> A first book for children.

<sup>5</sup> A garment worn by persons under trial by the Inquisition when they must appear in public.

Constitutions. All Constitutions formed for the French are provisionary. Whether they trip or tumble, whether they step or slide, the tendency is direct to slavery; none but a most rigid government will restrain them from cruelty or from mischief; they are scourged into good humor and starved into content. I have read whatever I could find on the English Constitution; and it appears to me, like the Deity, an object universally venerated, but requiring a Revelation. I do not find the House of Peers, as I expected to find it, standing between the king and people. Throughout a long series of years, it has been only twice in opposition to the Commons: once in declaring that the slave-trade ought not to be abolished; again in declaring that those who believe in transubstantiation are unfit to command an army or to decide a cause.

*Merino.* Into what extravagances does infidelity lead men, in other things not unwise! Blessed virgin of the thousand pains! and great Santiago of Compostella! deign to bring that benighted nation back again to the right path.

*Lacy.* On Deity we reason by attributes; on government by metaphors. Wool or sand, embodied, may deaden the violence of what is discharged against the walls of a city: hereditary aristocracy hath no such virtue against the assaults of despotism, which on the contrary it will maintain in opposition to the people. Since its power and wealth, although they are given *by* the king, must be given *from* the nation,—the one has not an interest in enriching it, the other has. All the countries that ever have been conquered have been surrendered to the conqueror by the aristocracy, stipulating for its own prop-

erty, power, and rank, yielding up the men, cattle, and metals on the common. Nevertheless, in every nation the project of an upper chamber will be warmly cherished. The richer aspire to honors, the poorer to protection. Every family of wealth and respectability wishes to count a peer among its relatives, and, where the whole number is yet under nomination, every one may hope it. Those who have no occasion for protectors desire the power of protecting; and those who have occasion for them desire them to be more efficient.

Despotism sits nowhere so secure as under the effigy and ensigns of Freedom. You would imagine that the British peers have given their names to beneficent institutions, wise laws, and flourishing colonies: no such thing; instead of which, a slice of meat between two slices of bread derives its name from one;<sup>6</sup> a tumble of heels over head, a feat performed by beggar-boys on the roads, from another.<sup>7</sup> The former, I presume, was a practical commentator on the Roman fable of the belly and the members, and maintained with all his power and interest the supremacy of the nobler part; and the latter was of a family in which the head never was equivalent to the legs. Others divide their titles with a waistcoat,<sup>8</sup> a bonnet,<sup>9</sup> and a boot;<sup>10</sup> the more illustrious with some island inhabited by sea-calves.<sup>11</sup>

*Merino.* I deprecate such importations into our monarchy. God forbid that the ermine of His Catholic Majesty be tagged with the sordid tail of a monster so rough as feudality!

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<sup>6</sup> Sandwich.

<sup>7</sup> Somerset.

<sup>8</sup> <sup>9</sup> <sup>11</sup> are left for the "gentle reader."

<sup>10</sup> Lord Bute.

*Lacy.* If kings, whether by reliance on external force, by introduction of external institutions, or by misapplication of what they may possess within the realm, show a disposition to conspire with other kings against its rights, it may be expected that communities will (some secretly and others openly) unite their moral, their intellectual, and, when opportunity permits it, their physical powers against them. If alliances are holy which are entered into upon the soil usurped, surely not unholy are those which are formed for defense against all kinds and all methods of spoliation. If men are marked out for banishment, for imprisonment, for slaughter, because they assert the rights and defend the liberties of their country, can you wonder at seeing, as you must ere long, a confederacy of free countries, formed for the apprehension or extinction of whoever pays, disciplines, or directs, under whatsoever title, those tremendous masses of human kind which consume the whole produce of their native land in depopulating another? Is it iniquitous or unnatural that laws be opposed to edicts, and Constitutions to despotism? O Señor Merino! there are yet things holy: all the barbarians and all the autocrats in the universe cannot make that word a byword to the Spaniard. Yes, there may be holy alliances; and the hour strikes for their establishment. This beautiful earth, these heavens in their magnificence and splendor, have seen things more lovely and more glorious than themselves. The throne of God is a speck of darkness, if you compare it with the heart that beats only and beats constantly to pour forth its blood for the preservation of our country! Invincible Spain! how many of thy children have laid this pure sacrifice on the altar! The Deity hath accepted

it: and there are those who would cast its ashes to the winds!

If ever a perverseness of character, or the perfidy taught in courts, should induce a king of Spain to violate his oath, to massacre his subjects, to proscribe his friends, to imprison his defenders, to abolish the representation of the people, Spain will be drawn by resentment to do what policy in vain has whispered in the ear of generosity. She and Portugal will be one: nor will she be sensible of disgrace in exchanging a prince of French origin for a prince of Portuguese. After all there is a northwest passage to the golden shores of Freedom; and, if pirates infest the opener seas, brave adventurers will cut their way through it. Let kings tremble at nothing but their own fraudulence and violence; and never at popular assemblies, which alone can direct them unerringly.

*Merino.* Educated as kings are, by pious men, servants of God, they see a chimera in a popular assembly.

*Lacy.* Those who refuse to their people a national and just representation, calling it a chimera, will one day remember that he who purchases their affections at the price of a chimera, purchases them cheaply; and those who, having promised the boon, retract it, will put their hand to the signature directed by a hand of iron. State after State comes forward in asserting its rights, as wave follows wave; each acting upon each; and the tempest is gathering in regions where no murmur or voice is audible. Portugal pants for freedom, in other words is free. With one foot in England and the other in Brazil,<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Portugal for years was ruled from Rio Janeiro, the royal family having been driven from the throne by Bonaparte.



there was danger in withdrawing either: she appears however to have recovered her equipose. Accustomed to fix her attention upon England, wisely will she act if she imitates her example in the union with Ireland; <sup>13</sup> a union which ought to cause no other regret than in having been celebrated so late. If, on the contrary, she believes that national power and prosperity are the peculiar gifts of independence, she must believe that England was more powerful and prosperous in the days of her heptarchy than fifty years ago. Algarve would find no more advantage in her independence of Portugal, than Portugal would find in continuing detached from the other portions of our peninsula. There were excellent reasons for declaring her independence at the time: there now are better, if better be possible, for a coalition. She, like ourselves, is in danger of losing her colonies: how can either party by any other means retrieve its loss? Normandy and Brittany, after centuries of war, joined the other provinces of France: more centuries of severer war would not sunder them. We have no such price to pay. Independence is always the sentiment that follows liberty; and it is always the most ardently desired by that country which, supposing the administration of law to be similar and equal, derives the greatest advantage from the union. According to the state of society in two countries, to the justice or injustice of government, to proximity or distance, independence may be good or bad. Normandy and Brittany would have found it hurtful and pernicious: they would have been corrupted by bribery, and overrun by competitors, the more formidable and the

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<sup>13</sup> In the time of the younger Pitt.

more disastrous from a parity of force. They had not, however, so weighty reasons for union with France, as Portugal has with Spain.

*Merino.* To avoid the collision of king and people, we may think about an assembly to be composed of the higher clergy and principal nobility.

*Lacy.* What should produce any collision, any dissension or dissidence, between king and people? Is the wisdom of a nation less than an individual's? Can *it* not see its own interests: and ought *he* to see any other? Surround the throne with state and splendor and magnificence, but withhold from it the means of corruption, which must overflow upon itself and sap it. To no intent or purpose can they ever be employed, unless to subvert the Constitution; and beyond the paling of a Constitution a king is *fera naturae*.<sup>14</sup> Look at Russia and Turkey: how few of their czars and sultans have died a natural death! — unless indeed in such a state of society the most natural death is a violent one. I would not accustom men to daggers and poisons; for which reason, among others, I would remove them as far as possible from despotism.

To talk of France is nugatory: England then, where more causes are tried within the year than among us within ten, has only twelve judges criminal and civil, in her ordinary courts. A culprit, or indeed an innocent man, may lie six months in prison before his trial, on suspicion of having stolen a petticoat or pair of slippers. As for her civil laws, they are more contradictory, more dilatory, more complicated, more uncertain, more expensive,

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<sup>14</sup> A wild beast, not entitled to protection.

more inhumane, than any now in use among men. They who appeal to them for redress of injury suffer an aggravation of it; and when Justice comes down at last, she alights on ruins. Public opinion is the only bulwark against oppression, and the voice of wretchedness is upon most occasions too feeble to excite it. Law in England, and in most other countries of Europe, is the crown of injustice burning and intolerable as that hammered and nailed upon the head of Zekkler, after he had been forced to eat the quivering flesh of his companions in insurrection. In the statutes of the North American United States, there is no such offense as libel upon the Government; because in that country there is no worthless wretch whose government leads to, or can be brought into, contempt. This undefined and undefinable offense in England hath consigned many just men and eminent scholars to poverty and imprisonment, to incurable maladies, and untimely death. Law, like the Andalusian bull, lowers her head and shuts her eyes before she makes her push; and either she misses her object altogether, or she leaves it immersed in bloodshed.

When an action is brought by one subject against another, in which he seeks indemnity for an injury done to his property, his comforts, or his character, a jury awards the amount; but if some parasite of the king wishes to mend his fortune, after a run of bad luck at the gaming-table or of improvident bets on the race-course, he informs the attorney-general that he has detected a libel on Majesty which, unless it be chastised and checked by the timely interference of those blessed institutions whence they are great and glorious, would leave no man's office, or honor, or peace inviolable. It

may happen that the writer, at worst, hath indulged his wit on some personal fault, some feature in the character far below the crown: this is enough for a prosecution; and the author, if found guilty, lies at the mercy of the judge. The jury in this case is never the awarder of damages. Are then the English laws equal for all? Recently there was a member of Parliament who declared to the people such things against the Government as were openly called seditious and libelous, both by his colleagues and his judges. He was condemned to pay a fine, amounting to less than the three-hundredth part of his property, and to be confined for three months—in an apartment more airy and more splendid than any in his own house. Another, no member of Parliament, wrote something ludicrous about Majesty, and was condemned, he and his brother, to pay the full half of their property, and to be confined among felons for two years! This confinement was deemed so flagrantly cruel, that the magistrates soon afterward allowed a little more light, a little more air, and better company; not, however, in separate wards, but separate prisons. The judge who pronounced the sentence is still living; he lives unbruised, unbranded, and he appears like a man among men.

*Merino.* Why not? He proved his spirit, firmness, and fidelity: in our country he would be appointed grand inquisitor on the next vacancy, and lead the queen to her seat at the first *auto da fé*.<sup>15</sup> Idlers and philosophers may complain; but certainly this portion of the English institutions ought to be commended warmly by every true

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<sup>15</sup> The public declaration of the judgment passed on accused persons tried before the courts of the Spanish Inquisition, and by extension the infliction of the penalty.

Spaniard, every friend to the altar and the throne. And yet, General, you mention it in such a manner as would almost let a careless, inattentive hearer go away with the persuasion that you disapprove of it. Speculative and dissatisfied men are existing in all countries, even in Spain and England; but we have scourges in store for the pruriency of dissatisfaction, and cases and caps for the telescopes of speculation.

*Lacy.* The faultiness of the English laws is not complained of nor pointed out exclusively by the speculative or the sanguine, by the oppressed or the disappointed; it was the derision and scoff of George the Second,<sup>16</sup> one of the bravest and most constitutional kings. "As to our laws," said he, "we pass near a hundred every session, which seem made for no other purpose but to afford us the pleasure of breaking them."

This is not reported by Whig or Tory, who change principles<sup>17</sup> as they change places, but by a dispassionate, unambitious man of sound sense and in easy circumstances, a personal and intimate friend of the king, from whose lips he himself received it—Lord Waldegrave. Yet an Englishman thinks himself quite as free, and governed quite as rationally, as a citizen of the United States: so does a Chinese. Such is the hemlock that habitude administers to endurance; and so long is it in this torpor ere the heart sickens.

I am far from the vehemence of the English commander, Nelson<sup>18</sup>—a man, however, who betrayed

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<sup>16</sup> The last English king who led an army.

<sup>17</sup> Conservative in office; radical, out.

<sup>18</sup> There is no greater name in the bloody story of naval warfare.



neither in war nor policy any deficiency of acuteness and judgment. He says unambiguously and distinctly in his letters, "All ministers of kings and princes are, in my opinion, as great scoundrels as ever lived."

Versatility, indecision, falsehood, and ingratitude, had strongly marked, as he saw, the two principal ones of his country, Pitt and Fox; the latter of whom openly turned honesty into derision, while the former sent it wrapped up decently to market. Now if all ministers of kings and princes are, what the admiral calls them from his experience, "as great scoundrels as ever lived," we must be as great fools as ever lived if we endure them: we should look for others.

*Merino.* Even that will not do: the new ones, possessing the same power and the same places, will be the same men.

*Lacy.* I am afraid then the change must not be only in the servants, but in the masters, and that we must not leave the choice to those who always choose "as great scoundrels as ever lived." Nelson was a person who had had much to do with the ministers of kings and princes; none of his age had more,—an age in which the ministers had surely no less to do than those in any other age since the creation of the world. He was the best commander of his nation; he was consulted and employed in every difficult and doubtful undertaking: he must have known them thoroughly. What meaning, then, shall we attribute to his words? Shall we say that "as great scoundrels as ever lived" ought to govern the universe in perpetuity? Or can we doubt that they must do so, if we suffer kings and princes to appoint them at each other's recommendation?



*Merino.* Nelson was a heretic, a blasphemmer, a revolutionist.

*Lacy.* On heresy and blasphemy I am incapable of deciding; but never was there a more strenuous antagonist of revolutionary principles; and upon this rock his glory split and foundered. When Sir William Hamilton<sup>19</sup> declared to the Neapolitan insurgents, who had laid down their arms before royal promises, that, his Government having engaged with the Allied Powers to eradicate revolutionary doctrines from Europe, he could not countenance the fulfillment of a capitulation which opposed the views of the *coalition*, what did Nelson? He tarnished the brightest sword in Europe, and devoted to the most insatiable of the Furies the purest blood! A Caroline and a Ferdinand,<sup>20</sup> the most opprobrious of the human race and among the lowest in intellect, were permitted to riot in the slaughter of a Caraccioli.

The English Constitution, sir, is founded on revolutionary doctrines, and her kings acknowledge it. Recollect now the note of her diplomatist. Is England in Europe? If she is, which I venture not to assert, her rulers have declared their intention to eradicate the foundations of her liberties; and they have broken their word so often that I am inclined to believe they will attempt to recover their credit by keeping it strictly here. But the safest and least costly conquests for England would be those over the understandings and the hearts of men. They require no garrisons; they equip no navies; they

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<sup>19</sup> English minister at Naples.

<sup>20</sup> "In June and July, 1799, I went to Naples, and, as his Sicilian Majesty is pleased to say, reconquered his kingdom and placed him on his throne."—*Memoirs of Nelson's Services*,

encounter no tempests: they withdraw none from labor; they might extend from the arctic to the antarctic circle, leaving every Briton at his own fireside; and Earth like Ocean would have her great Pacific. The strength of England lies not in armaments and invasions: it lies in the omnipresence of her industry, and in the vivifying energies of her high civilization. There are provinces she cannot grasp; there are islands she cannot hold fast; but there is neither island nor province, there is neither kingdom nor continent, which she could not draw to her side and fix there everlastingly, by saying the magic words, *Be Free*. Every land wherein she favors the sentiments of freedom, every land wherein she but forbids them to be stifled, is her own; a true ally, a willing tributary, an inseparable friend. Principles hold those together whom power could only alienate.

*Merino.* I understand little these novel doctrines; but Democracy herself must be contented with the principal features of the English Constitution. The great leaders are not taken from the ancient families.

*Lacy.* These push forward into Parliament young persons of the best talents they happen to pick up, whether at a ball or an opera, at a gaming-table or a college-mess, who from time to time, according to the offices they have filled, mount into the upper chamber and make room for others; but it is understood that, in both chambers, they shall distribute honors and places at the command of their patrons. True, indeed, the ostensible heads are not of ancient or even of respectable parentage. The more wealthy and powerful peers send them from their boroughs into the House of Commons, as they send race-horses from their stables to Newmarket, and cocks from

their training-yard to Doncaster. This is, in like manner, a pride, a luxury, a speculation. Even bankrupts have been permitted to sit there; men who, when they succeeded, were a curse to their country worse than when they failed.

Let us rather collect together our former institutions, cherish all that brings us proud remembrances, brace our limbs for the efforts we must make, train our youth on our own arena, and never deem it decorous to imitate the limp of a wrestler writhing in his decrepitude.

The Chamber of Peers in England is the dormitory of freedom and of genius. Those who enter it have eaten the lotus,<sup>21</sup> and forget their country. A minister, to suit his purposes, may make a dozen or a score or a hundred of peers in a day. If they are rich they are inactive; if they are poor they are dependent. In general he chooses the rich, who always want something; for wealth is less easy to satisfy than poverty, luxury than hunger. He can dispense with their energy if he can obtain their votes, and they never abandon him unless he has contented them.

*Merino.* Impossible! that any minister should make twenty, or even ten peers, during one convocation.

*Lacy.* The English, by a most happy metaphor, call them *batches*, seeing so many drawn forth at a time, with the rapidity of loaves from an oven, and molded to the same ductility by less manipulation. A minister in that system has equally need of the active and the passive, as the creation has equally need of males and females. Do not imagine I would discredit or depreciate the House of Peers. Never will another land contain one composed of

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<sup>21</sup> Like Dr. Johnson, in one of his pleasant halting places in the Hebrides.

characters in general more honorable; more distinguished for knowledge, for charity, for generosity, for equity; more perfect in all the duties of men and citizens. Let it stand; a nation should be accustomed to no changes, to no images but of strength and duration: let it stand, then, as a lofty and ornamental belfry, never to be taken down or lowered, until it threatens by its decay the congregation underneath; but let none be excommunicated who refuse to copy it, whether from faultiness in their foundation or from deficiency in their materials. Different countries require different governments. Is the rose the only flower in the garden? Is Hesperus the only star in the heavens? We may be hurt by our *safeguards*, if we try new ones.

Don Britomarte Delciego took his daily siesta on the grass in the city-dyke of Barbastro: he shaded his face with his *sombrero*, and slept profoundly. One day, unfortunately, a gnat alighted on his nose and bit it. Don Britomarte roused himself; and, remembering that he could enfold his arms in his mantle, took off a glove and covered the unprotected part with it. Satisfied at the contrivance, he slept again; and more profoundly than ever. Whether there was any savory odor in the glove I know not: certain is it that some rats came from under the fortifications, and, perforating the new defense of Don Britomarte, made a breach in the salient angle which had suffered so lately by a less potent enemy; and he was called from that day forward *the knight of the kid-skin visor*.

*Merino.* Sir, I do not understand stories: I never found wit or reason in them.

*Lacy.* England in the last twenty years has under-

gone a greater revolution than any she struggled to counteract — a revolution more awful, more pernicious. She alone of all the nations in the world hath suffered by that of France: she is become less wealthy by it, less free, less liberal, less moral. Half a century ago she was represented chiefly by her country-gentlemen. Pitt made the richer, peers; the intermediate, pensioners; the poorer, exiles; and his benches were overflowed with “honorables” from the sugar-cask<sup>22</sup> and indigo-bag. He changed all the features both of mind and matter. Old mansions were converted into workhouses and barracks: children who returned from school at the holidays stopped in their own villages, and asked why they stopped. More oaks<sup>23</sup> followed him than ever followed Orpheus; and more stones, a thousand to one, leaped down at his voice than ever leaped up at Amphion’s.<sup>24</sup> Overladen with taxation, the gentlemen of England — a class the grandest in character that ever existed upon earth, the best informed, the most generous, the most patriotic — were driven from their residences into cities. Their authority ceased; their example was altogether lost, and it appears by the calendars of the prisons, that two thirds of the offenders were from the country; whereas until these disastrous times four fifths were from the towns. To what a degree those of the towns themselves must have increased, may be supposed by the stagnation in many

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<sup>22</sup> Not the last illustration of the political power of sugar.

<sup>23</sup> “He breathed his sorrows in a desert cave,  
And soothed the tiger, moved the *oak*, with song.”

— *Landor*.

<sup>24</sup> When Amphion played upon his lyre, stones leaped up and took their places in the wall building around Thebes.



trades, and by the conversion of laborers and artisans to soldiers.

The country gentlemen, in losing their rank and condition, lost the higher and more delicate part of their principles. There decayed at once in them that robustness and that nobility of character, which men, like trees, acquire from standing separately. Deprived of their former occupations and amusements, and impatient of inactivity, they condescended to be members of gaming clubs in the fashionable cities, incurred new and worse expenses, and eagerly sought, from among the friendships they had contracted, those who might obtain for them or for their families some atom from the public dilapidation. Hence nearly all were subservient to the minister: those who were not were marked out as disaffected to the Constitution, or at best as singular men who courted celebrity from retirement.

Such was the state of the landed interest; and what was that of the commercial? Industrious tradesmen speculated; in other words, gamed. Bankers were coiners; not giving a piece of metal, but a scrap of paper. They who had thousands lent millions, and lost all. Slow and sure gains were discreditable! and nothing was a sight more common, more natural, or seen with more indifference, than fortunes rolling down from their immense accumulation. Brokers and insurers and jobbers, people whose education could not have been liberal, were now for the first time found at the assemblies and at the tables of the great, and were treated there with the first distinction. Every hand through which money passes was pressed affectionately. The viler part of what is democratical was supported by the aristocracy; the better



of what is republican was thrown down. England, like one whose features are just now turned awry by an apoplexy, is ignorant of the change she has undergone, and is the more lethargic the more she is distorted. Not only hath she lost her bloom and spirit, but her form and gait, her voice and memory. The weakest of mortals was omnipotent in Parliament; and being so, he dreamed in his drunkenness that he could compress the spirit of the times; and before the fumes had passed away, he rendered the wealthiest of nations the most distressed. The spirit of the times is only to be made useful by catching it as it rises, to be managed only by concession, to be controlled only by compliancy. Like the powerful agent <sup>25</sup> of late discovery, that impels vast masses across the ocean or raises them from the abysses of the earth, it performs everything by attention, nothing by force, and is fatal alike from coercion and from neglect. That government is the best which the people obey the most willingly and the most wisely; that state of society in which the greatest number may live and educate their families becomingly, by unstrained bodily and unrestricted intellectual exertion: where superiority in office springs from worth, and where the chief magistrate hath no higher interest in perspective than the ascendancy of the laws. Nations are not ruined by war: for convents and churches, palaces and cities, are not nations. The Messenians and Jews and Araucanians saw their houses and temples leveled with the pavement; the mightiness of the crash gave the stronger mind a fresh impulse, and it sprang high above the flames that consumed the last fragment.

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<sup>25</sup> Steam.

The ruin of a country is not the blight of corn, or the weight and impetuosity of hailstones; it is not inundation or storm, it is not pestilence or famine: a few years, perhaps a single one, may cover all traces of such calamity. But that country is too surely ruined in which morals are lost irretrievably to the greater part of the rising generation; and there are they about to sink and perish, where the ruler has given, by an unrepressed and an unproved example, the lesson of bad faith.

*Merino.* Sir, I cannot hear such language.

*Lacy.* Why then converse with me? Is the fault mine if such language be offensive? Why should intolerance hatch an hypothesis, or increase her own alarm by the obstreperous chuckle of incubation?

*Merino.* Kings stand in the place of God among us.

*Lacy.* I wish they would make way for the owner. They love God only when they fancy he has favored their passions, and fear him only when they must buy him off. If indeed they be his vicegerents on earth, let them repress the wicked and exalt the virtuous. Wherever in the material world there is a grain of gold, it sinks to the bottom; chaff floats over it: in the animal, the greatest and most sagacious of creatures hide themselves in woods and caverns, in morasses and solitudes, and we hear first of their existence when we find their bones. Do you perceive a resemblance anywhere? If princes are desirous to imitate the Governor of the universe; if they are disposed to obey him; if they consult religion or reason, or, what oftener occupies their attention, the stability of power,—they will admit the institutions best adapted to render men honest and peaceable, industrious and contented. Otherwise let them be certain that, although

they themselves may escape the chastisement they merit, their children and grandchildren will never be out of danger or out of fear. Calculations on the intensity of force are often just; hardly ever so those on its durability.

*Merino.* As if truly that depended on men!—a blow against a superintending Providence! It always follows the pestilential breath that would sully the majesty of kings.

*Lacy.* Señor Merino, my name, if you have forgotten it, is Lacy: take courage and recollect yourself. The whole of my discourse hath tended to keep the majesty of kings unsullied, by preserving their honor inviolate. Any blow against a superintending Providence is too insane for reproach, too impotent for pity: and indeed what peril can by any one be apprehended from the Almighty, when he has Cura Merino to preach for him, and the Holy Inquisition to protect him?

*Merino.* I scorn the sneer, sir; and know not by what right, or after what resemblance, you couple my name with the Holy Inquisition which our Lord the King in his wisdom hath not yet re-established, and which the Holy Allies for the greater part have abolished in their dominions.

*Lacy.* This never would have been effected if the holy heads of the meek usurpers<sup>20</sup> had not raised themselves above the crown; proving from doctors and confessors, from Old Testament and New, the privilege they possessed of whipping and burning and decapitating the wearer. The kings in their fright ran against the chalice of poison, by which many thousands of their subjects had

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<sup>20</sup> Heads of the Inquisition.

perished, and by which their own hands were, after their retractings and writhings, ungauntleted, undirked, and paralyzed.

Europe, Asia, America, sent up simultaneously to heaven, a shout of joy at the subversion. Africa, seated among tamer monsters and addicted to milder superstitions wondered at what burst and dayspring of beatitude the human race was celebrating around her so high and enthusiastic a jubilee.

*Merino.* I take my leave, General. May your Excellency live many years!

I breathe the pure street-air again. Traitor and atheist; I will denounce him. He has shaved for the last time: he shall never have Christian burial.





WILLIAM WORDSWORTH



## WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

1770-1850.

A STRIKING contrast will present itself, if we bring together in our thought the lives of Keats, Burns, Shelley, and Byron, heroically crowded with labors and seasoned with misery, and that of Wordsworth,—four-score years, and the consequent ample time for the full ripening of his faculties, the perfect growth of his genius; and long before the sear and yellow leaf, and during its happy period long drawn out:—

“That which should accompany old age,  
As honor, love, obedience, troops of friends.”

We have read how Shakespeare's senses were cultivated by the beautiful scenery in which he lived. So was it with Wordsworth. The same cause acted powerfully upon his mind and stored it with images which all his life not only—

“Flashed upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude,”

but they irradiate his poetry and charm the esthetic nature of his readers, including his large following of pupil-poets in England and America.

In his poems he names some of the books he loved and fed on; the writings of Fielding, Cervantes, Le Sage, Swift. He went to college and excelled in the classics. He gained all the benefits to be drawn from foreign travel. A list of his acquaintances—friends like De Quincey and enemies like Jeffrey—would in-

clude all the prominent English writers of his long day. His sister Dorothy was not only a sister, but an effective helper in his literary work.

Wordsworth's poems fill many volumes. As with Shelley and even with Milton, his shorter poems are the best known. The one here presented he never excelled, but how few poems of its length, whoever the writer, deserve a place above it!

It seems to me that Wordsworth stands fourth, if not third, in the roll of authors from whose lines apt and beautiful quotations are borrowed, ready to point a moral or adorn a tale.

"The light that never was on sea, or land."

"A creature, not too bright or good."

"A perfect woman, nobly planned."

"I wandered lonely as a cloud."

"Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns."

"We see into the life of things."

"Pious beyond the intention of your thought."

"The child is father of the man."

"A primrose by a river's brim."

"The vision and the faculty divine."

And so on, and so on.

Like Coleridge, an apostle of human liberty, and like him, shocked to the soul by the excesses of the French Revolution, Wordsworth became a conservative; a Tory, I think, he was called.

This will explain but hardly justify the fine but reproachful sonnets of which he was the subject, written by Shelley, Browning, and, perhaps others,

"For oh, this world and the wrong it does!"

The "wrong," however, in Wordsworth's case was slight. He was securely placed behind the barricade of his sublime confidence in himself and in his theories of poetic art.

In 1843, he succeeded Southey as Poet Laureate and remained in this post of honor till his death, which sad event, it is interesting to notice, occurred on the anniversary of the birth and death of Shakespeare.

### TO WORDSWORTH.

"Poet of Nature, thou hast wept to know  
That things depart which never may return;  
Childhood and youth, friendship and love's first glow,  
Have fled like sweet dreams, leaving thee to mourn.  
These common woes I feel. One loss is mine,  
Which thou too feel'st, yet I alone deplore;  
Thou wert as a lone star whose light did shine  
On some frail bark in winter's midnight roar;  
Thou hast like to a rock-built refuge stood  
Above the blind and battling multitude;  
In honored poverty thy voice did weave  
Songs consecrate to truth and liberty;—  
Deserting these, thou leavest me to grieve,  
Thus having been that thou shouldst cease to be."

—*Shelley.*

"Take up a poem of Wordsworth and read it,—I would rather say read them all; and I will then appeal to you whether any poet of our country, since Milton, hath exerted greater powers with less of strain and less of ostentation." —*Landor.*



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The child is father of the man;  
And I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural piety.

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II.

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But yet I know where'er I go,  
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.

## III.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,  
And while the young lambs bound 20  
As to the tabor's sound,  
To me alone there came a thought of grief:  
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,  
And I again am strong:  
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep; 25  
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;  
I hear the echoes through the mountains throng,  
The winds come to me from the fields of sleep,<sup>2</sup>  
And all the air is gay;  
Land and sea 30  
Give themselves up to jollity,  
And with the heart of May  
Doth every beast keep holiday;—  
Thou Child of Joy,  
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy 35  
Shepherd-boy!

## IV.

Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the call.  
Ye to each other make; I see  
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;  
My heart is at your festival,  
My head hath its coronal, 40  
The fulness of your bliss, I feel, I feel it all.  
O evil day! if I were sullen

---

<sup>2</sup> The country around still and quiet.



While Earth herself is adorning,<sup>3</sup>  
     This sweet May morning,  
 And the Children are culling 45  
     On every side,  
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,  
 Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,  
 And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm: —  
     I hear, I hear, with joy I hear! 50  
     — But there's a Tree, of many, one,  
 A single Field which I have looked upon,  
 Both of them speak of something that is gone:  
     The pansy at my feet  
     Doth the same tale repeat: 55  
 Whither is fled the visionary <sup>4</sup> gleam?  
 Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

## V.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:  
 The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,  
     Hath had elsewhere its setting, 60  
     And cometh from afar:  
 Not in entire forgetfulness,  
 And not in utter nakedness,  
 But trailing clouds of glory, do we come  
     From God, who is our home: 65  
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy!  
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
     Upon the growing Boy,  
 But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,

---

<sup>3</sup> Used intransitively or reflexively.

<sup>4</sup> The gleam is like a vision. Wordsworth speaks elsewhere of "recollected hours that have the charm of visionary things."

He sees it in his joy ;  
 The Youth, who daily farther from the East  
     Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,  
     And by the vision splendid  
     Is on his way attended ;  
 At length the Man perceives it die away,  
 And fade into the light of common day.

70

75

## VI.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;  
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,  
 And, even with something of a Mother's mind,  
     And no unworthy aim,  
     The homely Nurse doth all she can  
 To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,  
     Forget the glories he hath known,  
 And that imperial palace whence he came.<sup>5</sup>

80

## VII.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,  
 A six years' Darling of a pigmy size !  
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,  
 Fretted <sup>6</sup> by sallies of his mother's kisses,  
 With light upon him from his father's eyes !

85

<sup>5</sup> The heaven that preceded earth.

" I remember, I remember,  
     The fir trees dark and high :  
 I used to think their slender tops  
     Were close against the sky.

" It was a childish ignorance,  
     But now 'tis little joy  
 To know I'm farther off from heaven  
     Than when I was a boy."— *Thomas Hood*.

<sup>6</sup> teased.

See, at his feet, some little plan or chart, 90  
 Some fragment from his dream of human life,  
 Shaped by himself with newly learned art;  
     A wedding or a festival,  
     A mourning or a funeral;  
     And this hath now his heart, 95  
 And unto this he frames his song: <sup>7</sup>  
     Then will he fit his tongue  
 To dialogues of business, love, or strife;  
     But it will not be long  
     Ere this be thrown aside, 100  
     And with new joy and pride  
 The little Actor cons <sup>8</sup> another part;  
 Filling from time to time his "humorous <sup>9</sup> stage"  
 With all the Persons,<sup>10</sup> down to palsied Age,  
 That Life brings with her in her equipage; 105  
     As if his whole vocation  
     Were endless imitation.

## VIII.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie  
     Thy Soul's immensity;  
 Thou best Philosopher who yet dost keep 110  
     Thy heritage, thou Eye <sup>11</sup> among the blind,  
 That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,  
 Haunted forever by the eternal mind,—  
     Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!

---

<sup>7</sup> tells his story.

<sup>8</sup> learns.

<sup>9</sup> capricious.

<sup>10</sup> characters.

<sup>11</sup> Alluding to the child's constant looking.

On whom those truths do rest, 115  
 Which we are toiling all our lives to find,  
 In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;  
 Thou, over whom thy Immortality  
 Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,  
 A Presence which is not to be put by; 120  
 Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might  
 Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,  
 Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke <sup>12</sup>  
 The years to bring the inevitable yoke,  
 Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife? 125  
 Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,<sup>13</sup>  
 And custom <sup>14</sup> lie upon thee with a weight,  
 Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

## IX.

O joy! that in our embers  
 Is something that doth live, 130  
<sup>15</sup> That Nature yet remembers  
 What was so fugitive!  
 The thought <sup>16</sup> of our past years in me doth breed  
 Perpetual benediction: <sup>17</sup> not indeed  
 For that which is most worthy to be blest; 135  
 Delight and liberty, the simple creed  
 Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,  
 With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:  
 Not for these I raise

---

<sup>12</sup> invite, exhort.

<sup>13</sup> cares.

<sup>14</sup> All the trammels that society will place upon him.

<sup>15</sup> "Joy" again.

<sup>16</sup> recollection.

<sup>17</sup> blessing, or thanksgiving.

The song of thanks and praise; 140

<sup>18</sup> But for those obstinate questionings  
Of sense and outward things,

Fallings from us, vanishings;  
Blank misgivings of a Creature

Moving about in worlds not realized, 145

High instincts before which our mortal Nature  
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised:

But for those first affections,

Those shadowy recollections,

Which, be they what they may, 150

Are yet the fountain light of all our day,

Are yet a master light of all our seeing;

Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make

Our noisy years seem moments in the being

Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,

To perish never;

Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,

Nor Man nor Boy,

Nor all that is at enmity with joy,

Can utterly abolish or destroy! 160

Hence in a season of calm weather,

Though inland far we be,

Our souls have sight of that immortal sea <sup>19</sup>

Which brought us hither,

Can in a moment travel thither, 165

---

<sup>18</sup> In this oft-quoted passage, does not the poet slip into prose?  
And what a return in line 147!

<sup>19</sup> "Yet, by some subtler touch of sympathy,  
These primal apprehensions, dimly stirred,  
Perplex the eye with pictures from within.  
This hath made poets dream of lives foregone  
Into worlds fantastical, more fair than ours."

—Lowell, *The Cathedral*.

And see the Children sport upon the shore,  
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

## X.

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!  
And let the young Lambs bound  
As to the tabor's sound! 170  
We in thought will join your throng,  
Ye that pipe and ye that play,  
Ye that through your hearts to-day  
Feel the gladness of the May!  
What though the radiance which was once so bright 175  
Be now forever taken from my sight,  
Though nothing can bring back the hour  
Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower;  
We will grieve not, rather find  
Strength in what remains behind; 180  
In the primal sympathy  
Which, having been, must ever be;  
In the soothing thoughts that spring  
Out of human suffering;  
In the faith that looks through death,  
In years <sup>20</sup> that bring the philosophic mind.

## XI.

And O ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,  
Forbode not any severing of our loves!  
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;

---

<sup>20</sup> "Till old experience do attain

To something like prophetic strain."—*Il Penseroso*.

"'Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore."—*Campbell*.



I only have relinquished one delight 190  
 To live beneath your more habitual sway.  
 I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,  
 Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;  
 The innocent brightness of a new-born Day  
     Is lovely yet; 195  
 The Clouds that gather round the setting sun  
 Do take a sober coloring from an eye  
 That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;  
 Another race hath been, and other palms are won.  
 Thanks to the human heart by which we live, 200  
 Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,  
 To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> "To that dream-like vividness and splendor which invest objects of sight in childhood, every one, I believe, if he would look back, could bear testimony, and I need not dwell upon it here; but having in the poem regarded it as a presumptive evidence of a prior state of existence, I think it right to protest against a conclusion which has given pain to some good and pious persons, that I meant to inculcate such a belief. It is far too shadowy a notion to be recommended to faith as more than an element in our instincts of immortality."—*Wordsworth*.

Wordsworth also informs his readers that two years passed between the writing of the first four stanzas and the remaining part of the Ode.



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